

FORTY SIX
SERMONS
UPON THE
WHOLE EIGHTH CHAPTER
OF THE
EPISTLE
OF THE
APOSTLE PAUL
TO THE
ROMANS.

Lately Preached by the Reverend and Learned
THOMAS HORTON, Doctor in Divinity,
And late Minister of Saint *Helens* in *London*.

Left perfected for the Press under his own hand a little before his Death.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *A. Maxwell* for *Tho. Parkhurst*, and are to be sold at his
Shops at the Bible and three Crowns in *Cheapside* near *Admiral*
Chappel, and at the Bible on *London-Bridg*. 1674.



TO THE
READER.

Christian Reader,

THAT I would be instrumental in handing this Book unto thee, was the desire of a near and dear Relation of the Author; in consenting whereunto, I found (I confess) some difficulty; as well knowing with how much more advantage both to the Author's Memory and his Work, this office might have been performed by another hand. But being unwilling so much as to seem wanting to any friendly service, which the deserts of the Author, seconded by the desires of his Relict, might challenge from me, (who had once the honour of having him bear my Name in the Colledg), I have (as thou seest) undertaken the business, leaving the disadvantage to be warranted by the desires which have occasioned it. But the best of it is, neither the Work nor its Author need much to be said of them; *that* praising *him* in the gate; and *be* recommending *it* abundantly to all such as had the happiness to know him, or to be acquainted with his Ministry. For I may truly say of him, That he lived not in a corner; having been bred up in one * Colledg * *Emmanuel.*
A 2 (where-

(whereof he was a Fellow for many years together); and afterwards Master of another, and Vice-chancellor of the University of *Cambridg*; and having for very many years exercised his Ministry in more than one considerable intelligent Auditory in the great City of *London* (the place of his Nativity); wherein he also was for many years Professor of Divinity in *Gresham-Colledg*, succeeding the Reverend Dr. *Holdsworth*, who is said to have put him into the Pulpit there with his own hand, and with these words, *And he took the garments of Aaron, and put them upon Eleazer his son*; thereby, as it were, investing him in that Office.

All which Places he discharged with no small approbation of sober and judicious persons.

But it is not my present design to write his life, much less to make any Panegyrick-Oration, or to bestick him with any praises which do not justly belong unto him; but by this little which I have said, to give thee to conceive how little need there is of any such attempt concerning him who lived in *luce hominum*, and was well known to so considerable a part of men of the age he lived in; and might not improperly have said to the City (his Mother), as ^{2 Tim. 3.} ^{10.} Saint Paul wrote once to his Son *Timothy*, *Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience.* Concerning the first whereof (as most concerned in the Work ensuing), I shall briefly acquaint his Countrey-Reader with somewhat observable, and deserving others imitation.

It was his constant care that the matter and subject

ject of his Sermons should be the Truths of God, and according to the form of sound words; and himself a little before his departure, being not able to speak much, exhorted such as were about him to believe and practise that Doctrine which he had formerly taught them; for it was the truth of Jesus Christ which he was wont to preach, *not with excellency of speech, or wisdom of words, or inticing words which mans wisdom teacheth; but as declaring the testimony of God, and in the evidence and demonstration of the spirit; with all plainness and gravity, as best becoming the divinity and richness of the matter; which some, while they think to adorn, do but adulterate; for it receives not worth nor real ornament from humane trimmings, any more than pure massy Gold doth by gilt, or being painted.*

But that which was most remarkable in his preaching, was his diligence both in his preparation, delivery, and constancy in both. For knowing the Word of God to be a Mine of inexhausted worth, he did not satisfy himself in surveying the surface of the Text, but digged deep into it, *search- Prov. 2.4.*
ing as for hid treasure (like those who Solomon saith shall find Wisdom); and being furnished by the advantage of his Education, with more than ordinary skill in the Original Languages, he was often observed by means thereof to raise up many pertinent and important Truths out of a Text, even after he had exhausted the expectation of the judicious hearer.

His matter being by diligent search and study thus found out, he used to dispose in the most natural

tural and facile method that he could ; that so both his hearers might the more distinctly bear it in their minds (without which he knew it would do them but little good), and himself might with the more life and advantage deliver it unto them ; which he was wont to do by memory, without any help of his Notes in the delivery: for God having given him a good memory, he thought it a Talent which he was bound not to wrap up in a napkin or a sheet of paper (as too many do now-a-days), but to employ that, as well as other gifts, in the exercise of his Ministry; wherein he was (as I may say in some respects) extraordinarily constant, having preached every Lords day without intermission for nigh sixteen years together, at least once, often twice, sometimes thrice in one day (as himself with thankfulness to God acknowledged), and continuing to preach publickly in times of the Pestilence raging in the City; wherein though others might think he adventured too far; yet he thought himself (as I have heard him say) invited thereunto by that extraordinary Providence which had preserved him (being an Infant) from that Disease, while his Nurse had it upon her.

R. Bolton. But I must not forget that I promised brevity; I shall therefore only add, That what he preached in publick, it was his care and endeavour (as a * Reverend Divine said of himself) to work it first upon his own heart in private (the best way of getting Sermons by heart), the comfort whereof he found abundantly in the time of his sickness.

Such an Expofitor did the Chapter (which is the sub-

subject of this Work) require; which is a Magazine of a Christian's comfort, containing in it the most spiritual and comfortable Doctrine of the Holy Spirit's inhabiting, conducting, assisting, and comforting of the Saints; who being embarked in the unchangeable love of God electing, justifying, sanctifying, and preserving them, are enabled to ride triumphantly with a full-ailed Plerophory over all the waves of Affliction, Persecution, and Opposition whatsoever. This is the subject of this present Work, which the Author left finished with his own hand; the reading whereof, that God would be pleased to bless and make conducing to thy comfort here, and eternal salvation hereafter; is the earnest prayer of

Thy Servant in the Gospel

of Jesus Christ,

William Dillingham.

Advertisement.

THere is now also coming forth of the same Author *Dr. Tho. Horton*, these following Treatises. *Viz.*

Eight Sermons upon the whole Fourth *Psalm*.

Ten Sermons upon the whole *XLII. Psalm*.

Nineteen Sermons upon the whole *LI. Psalm*.

All which were left under his own hand, ready for the Press.

The BOOKSELLER to the READER.

I*T cannot be well supposed, but there is some Literal and Verbal Errata's in a Book of this Bulk, what are observed as such the Reader cannot with candor charge upon the Reverend Author, but blame the Printer.*

T. P.

Forty Six

SERMONS

Upon the whole Eighth Chapter
OF THE
Epistle to the Romans.

SERMON I.

ROMANS 8. 1.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

It is the Great Advantage and Priviledg of the Saints and Servants of God, that whatever befalls them otherwise, God is sure still to take care of their Salvation, and to provide for their blessed state and condition in another world. And it is likewise a part of great wisdom and Christian prudence in themselves, to be careful to make it good to themselves in their own Hearts and Consciences. To get a comfortable evidence and assurance of their future happiness, and consequently of their freedom from wrath and condemnation. Here we have declared unto us, That there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, &c.

IN the Text it self there are two general Parts considerable: First, the Persons mentioned. And Secondly, the benefit or priviledg assign'd and belonging to these persons. The persons mentioned, they are the
B children

children of God; who are here set forth unto us under a double description: First, From their *state and condition*, such as are *in Christ Jesus*. Secondly, From their *life and conversation*, who *walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit*. The benefit or priviledg which is here assign'd and belonging to these persons, is exemption and freedom from condemnation; there is *no condemnation to them*. These are the parts of the Text.

We begin with the first of these Generals, *viz.* The *Persons mentioned*. And that as they are first of all considerable under their *first description*; Those which are *in Christ Jesus*. This is an expression which is frequently and very often in holy Scripture fastened upon the *children of God*. Sometimes *Christ* is said to be *in them*; and sometimes they are said to be *in Christ*, and both cometh to one and the same effect. Our business at this time is with the latter of these expressions, whereby they are said to be *in Christ*. This is the *state and condition* of all those who are *regenerate and true believers*, They are such as are *in Christ Jesus*; that is, there is a near *Union and conjunction* betwixt him and them. *Christ* is one with them; and they are one with him. This is the meaning of their being *in him*. This is clear to us from that place in *Joh. 6.56*, *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him*. And *Joh. 17.21*. Our blessed Saviour prays to his Father in the behalf of his *Disciples*, that they all might be one *in him*, and in his Father, as his Father is *in him*, and he *in his Father*.

This *Union of Believers with Christ*, it is exprest to us in Scripture under divers and sundry similitudes and representations: First, Of the *Union* which is betwixt *Husband and Wife* in marriage. This *Union* of a Believer with Christ, it is a *conjugal or matrimonial Union*. Look as in marriage the Husband and the Wife are all one, for *two* (says he) *shall be one flesh*: So here is Christ and a Believer *one also* in this *spiritual conjunction*. He which is *joined to the Lord*, is *one spirit*, *1 Cor. 6. 17*. And the Apostle Paul, speaking of marriage, *Eph. 5.32*, saith, *This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church*.

Secondly, Of the *Union of the Members with the Head*; it is an *Union of incorporation*. Look as in a *natural body*, the *Head* it hath all the several *Members* knit and united to it self by *Joints and Nerves*; so hath Christ all those who are true Believers knit and united to him likewise. And as the Head does convey an influence of *life and vigor* to the Members; so also does Christ convey *grace, and life, and vigor* to every Believer, as we may see in *Col. 2.19, &c.* Thus *Eph. 5.23*. *As the Husband is the head of the Wife, so is Christ also the Head of the Church, and he is the Saviour of the body*. For we are *Members of his body*, of his flesh, and of his bone.

Thirdly, Of the *Branches with the Vine*: It is an *Union of Ingrafture*, *Joh. 15. 1. &c.* *I am the Vine, ye are the Branches, &c.* He that *abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit*. Look as every true and living branch, it doth partake of the sap, and juice, and vertue which is in the *root*; so every true Christian which is implanted and set into Christ, doth partake of vertue from him.

Lastly, Of the *stones in a building with the foundation*. Look as in an House or Structure, the stones they are firily joined together one with

with another, and all resting upon the common foundation; even so do Believers in their mutual conjunction with each other rest upon *Christ*. He is a *sure foundation*, an *Union of Edification*, the *foundation founded*, as he is called, *Isa. 28. 16*. And no other foundation besides him can any man lay, says the Apostle Paul of him, in *2 Cor. 3. 11*. He is the *living Stone*, to whom we coming are built up a *spiritual house*, *1 Pet. 2. 4, 5*. He is the *chief corner stone*, in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth up to an *holy Temple in the Lord*, *Eph. 2. 21*. Thus is this *Union* every way illustrated and set forth to us in Scripture under sundry comparisons.

Yea so near and close an Union is this indeed in the *true nature* of it, as that sometimes (from hence) we shall find the *Church* called by the name of *Christ himself*, as *1 Cor. 12. 12*. As the Body is *one*, and hath *many members*, and all the members of that body, being many are one body; even so also is *Christ*, so also is *Christ*, that is, the *Church of Christ*, which hath *his Name* put upon it, as may appear by the *verse* immediately following: So in another place the Church is said to be the *fulnes* of Christ, as if he could not be *complete* without her. *Eph. 1. 22, 23*, He is the head over all things *to the Church*; which is *his body*, the *fulnes* of Him that *filleth all in all*. Though Christ considered personally is full and absolute in himself; yet considered relatively, and mystically, so he is not full and complete without believers who are members of Him.

Now if (for the better opening and unfolding of this Doctrine unto us) we shall further inquire into the *causes and grounds* of this *Union* whereof we now speak; what those *Bonds and ligaments* are, whereby we are knit and united to *Christ* and made One with him: We must here know that they are of *two sorts*; The *one* is the *Spirit* on *Christ's* part, and the *other* is *Faith* on ours.

First, We are knit to *Christ*, and made One with him by his *Spirit*. Look as that *member* of the *Body* is not *united to the Head*, that is not *animated*, and *informed* with the *same soul* that is in the *Head*; so neither is that *Christian* truly united to *Christ*, who is not quickened, and invivified by that Spirit which is the *spirit of Christ*. If any man have not the *spirit* of Christ, he is none of his, *Rom. 8. 9*. This is therefore the *first* thing which God doth with us in reference to this *Union*, by pouring forth this upon us; The *second Adam* is made a quickning *Spirit*, *1 Cor. 15. 45*. And he quickeneth whom he will, *Joh. 5. 21*; and *1 Joh. 4. 21*. Hereby we know, that we *dwell in him*, and *he in us*, because he hath given us of his *Spirit*; by all which it plainly appears that this *Mystery* of our Union with Christ consists chiefly in this; That the self-same Spirit which is *primarily* in Him as the *Head*, is *secundarily* in us as his *Members*: and so from Him derived to every one of us, as that thereby we are *animated*, and quickened to a *spiritual Life*: Though in regard of Christ's *corporal presence*, so the *Heaven* must receive him till the restitution of all things, *Act. 3. 22*. Yet in regard of his *spiritual presence*, so he is with us always even to the end of the World; *Matt. 28. 20*. And by the *Vital influence* of this Spirit of his, from Him as from our Head, the whole Body is fitly joyned together, and compacted by that which every joynt supplyeth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, *Eph. 4. 16*.

Secondly, Another Bond whereby we are knit to *Christ* is *Faith*, which is a special Gift and Fruit of the Spirit; whereby *secondarily* we are united to him, and lay hold on that Righteousness which is in him, and receive *all that Grace* which is offered and tendered by Him in the Gospel. This is that *Grace* which the Scripture does to this purpose advance above all others besides. *Hab. 2. 4.* The Just shall live by *Faith*. *Gal. 5. 5.* We through the *Spirit* wait for the hope of Righteousness by *Faith*. *Gal. 2. 20.* The Life only I now live in the Flesh, I live by the *faith of the Son of God*, &c. Thus we see the causes and means of this mystical Union which is betwixt Christ and Believers: From hence

The Improvement of this Point to our selves by way Application, is To be much in the thoughts and contemplation of it; and to have our minds taken up much about it. There's a *threefold Mystical Union* the Scripture only does offer and exhibit to the thought of a Christian: The First is the Union of three Persons in one Nature. The Second is the Union of two Natures in one Person. And the third is the Union of Natures and Persons together in one quality or condition. In the First, we have one God; In the second, we have one Mediator; In the third, we have one Church: That which is here considerable of us at this present time is the last of these three. And it is such as deserves very much to be thought upon by us, which is the Union of Believers with Christ; whereby He and they are all *spiritually* joyn'd together to the making up of one *Mystical Body*. This is a very high honour and dignity unto them, and so to be accounted of by them; and accordingly it should have answerable Effects and Operations upon them; As,

First, To exceeding *joyfulness* and exultation in this their Condition: we see how all men for the most part do rejoyce in the excellency of their Relations, Wives in their Husbands, Children in their Parents. The nearer is the Union to those who are of worth and renown, the greater is the contentment in it; why, thus it should now be with Believers in regard of Christ. Those who through his Spirit and by Faith are united and incorporate into Him, and made Members of his *Mystical Body*, Oh how much does it become them to rejoyce in this particular! especially considering that this is no Fancy or mere notion and imagination, but a very truth and reality indeed. There is no wife whatsoever in the world, that is more one with her husband in Marriage, than a Believer is one with Christ by vertue of that Covenant and Contract which is drawn between them. *I am my Beloved's; and my Beloved is mine.* It is that which may be the speech and expression of every Christian.

Secondly, It should work us to a *conformity to Christ* in our Carriage; being one with Him, we should behave our selves suitably to Him. It is a shame for those who are one with Christ to walk in ways of opposition to him. And therefore in the clause that follows, they are joyned with such as *walk after the Spirit*; as being that which is most proper to them. Christians should think themselves too good to defile themselves with any thing which is unlawful; as unagreeable to their *spiritual relation* in which they stand to *Christ Jesus*, to whom they are united.

Thirdly, It may encourage Gods servants to depend upon him for all things fitting and convenient for them; and to perswade themselves of his favour towards them. Therefore he will hear their prayers, and grant

grant these things which they shall ask at his hands, because their persons are accepted in *Christ*; and as he cannot deny *Him*, so neither will he deny *them* likewise.

And on the other side, those *that wrong them* may be advised to take heed how they do so; for he takes their wrongs as done to Himself. *Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me?* The Husband is concern'd whiles the Wife is injur'd; And so is Christ in the *injuries* of his people: In all their Affliction He was afflicted, &c. says the Prophet in *Isa. 64. v. 9, &c.*

And so much may be spoken of the *First Description* of the *Persons* here mentioned, taken from *their State and Condition*: Namely; such as are in *Christ Jesus*.

The *Second* is taken from their *Life and Conversation*; *Who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit*. These two they go still together; *Union with Christ* and *Holiness of life* they are inseparable. And it may appear from this *Connexion* which we meet withal here in the Text. This passage before us, is considerable here of us two manner of ways, 1. Separately, and 2. Joyntly. 1. Separately, and so it consists of two distinct Branches; The *Negative* and the *Affirmative*: The *Negative* is in these words, which *walk not after the flesh*. The *Affirmative* in these, *but after the spirit*.

First; To look upon it in the *Negative*. Those that are *true Believers*, and that are *Mystically united to Christ Jesus*, they do *not walk after the flesh*; This is one character which is upon them; Thus, *Gal. 5. 24*, They which are *Christs* have crucified the *flesh* with the Affections and Lusts. For the better understanding of this Point; It is worth our while to inquire what it is to walk after the flesh, and who they are, which are said *thus to walk*. By the *flesh* then we are here to understand not only that *part of man* which is commonly so called, to wit, the *Body Lump*; but by *flesh* here is meant *corrupt Nature*; that is, that *part of man* which is *unsanctified and unregenerate* in him: Not only the *Depravation* of the *inferior faculties* of the soul, which we commonly call *Sensuality*; but also a *corruption* of the *superior*, namely, the *Mind*, and *Understanding*, and *Will*. These are the *flesh*, both here and in the *whole course of Scripture*. Now to *walk after this flesh*, (*ωπιμαίνωσθαι αὐτῇ σαρκὶ*) it is to be wholly led, and carried, and guided by the motions of it. Then *men walk after the flesh*, when their *whole course is carnal*, when they are *carnal* in their judgments, following the *disputes* and *suggestions* of *carnal Reason*; and *carnal* in their affections, setting their hearts and desires upon *carnal things*; and *carnal* in their lives, conversing and bestirring themselves in *carnal ways*. Those which do *all or either* of these, and which do them *constantly*, they *walk after the flesh*. To *walk after the flesh*, is not only to *have flesh* in us, (which even the *best of Gods Servants* have while they live here in the world), but to have the *flesh prevailing* in us, and to give our selves up to the *power and dominion* of it.

There is a walking in the flesh, and there is a walking after the flesh, as the Apostle Paul does plainly distinguish them concerning himself, *2 Cor. 10. 2, 3*. *I beseech ye, that I may not be bold with the confidence wherewith I think to be bold against some; which think of us, as if we walked according to the flesh. But though we walk in the flesh, yet we do not war after the flesh*. That is, though we live in the body, and carry a

fleshy lump, and tabernacle about us; yet for all that we do not fight under the banners of corrupt Nature, which we do utterly and wholly renounce. And thus for the Negative expression. Those which are in Christ Jesus, they do not walk after the flesh.

The second is the Affirmative, but walk after the Spirit. Those who are the Children of God, and true Believers, they are careful to do this. And so they are represented in Scripture. Hence they are said, *To walk in the Spirit: To walk in newness of life: To serve in newness of Spirit: To walk with God: To have their conversation in Heaven;* and such phrases as these are. What is to be understood by walking after the Spirit, we may gather from what was said of the contrary, namely, of walking after the flesh; and that is, to be guided, and led, and directed by the blessed and gracious Spirit of God in all our ways. To walk after the Spirit is both to savour the things of the Spirit (Rom. 8. 5.), as also regulate, and frame, and order our whole lives and conversations according to the line and square of Gods holy Word and Spirit. To walk after the Spirit is not only to have some good motions or desires stirring in us, or to do some good works and actions for a fit, and there's an end; but to be ready to every good work, as we have occasion offered to us for it. Walking, it is a continued motion; It is a motion of perseverance; and so does denote constancy in him that uses it. And thus is it with those that are in Christ. They walk thus.

The ground and foundation of this Truth, is the conformity of the Members to the Head; and the obedience of the workmanship to Him who is the workman and fashioner of it. Christ, who is our Head, he is spiritual, and therefore we who are his Members must be spiritual; yea, and so will be, if we be his Members indeed. As it is in the natural Body, so is it also in the mystical. In the natural Body; The Head does not go one way, and the members stray another; but they go both in the same course. And so here; He that saith, *he abideth in Christ*, ought so to walk, even as he walked; as the Apostle John tells us, in 1 Joh. 2. 6, &c.

Again, As from the consideration of the conformity of the members to the Head; so also from the consideration of the obedience of the workmanship to him that fashioned it. You know a skilful Workman or Artificer does frame and fashion his work answerable to that conceit and Idea which is in his own mind; let it be a Bowle, or a Watch, or any Engine whatsoever. He makes it still to go so as he would have it. Even so is it likewise here in the work of Regeneration; there is a stamp and impression of Christs skill and spirit upon us, to make us walk answerably to himself; For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them, Eph. 2. 10. Those who are created in Christ Jesus, will walk in good works.

The Union of a Believer with Christ, and the Relation wherein he stands unto him, is not empty and fruitless, but is powerful, and efficacious to a godly and holy life. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, says our Saviour, in Joh. 15. 5. where there is an Union with Christs Person, there is a Communion in his Graces, and an habitation of his Spirit in us.

There-

Therefore accordingly we may judg of the *one* by the *other*. We may *know* what we *are*, by considering *how* we *walk*, and what is the *frame* and *course* of our *lives*. If we say we have *fellowship* with him, and *walk* in *darkness*, we *lye* and *do not* the *truth*, says the Apostle John, 1 *Job.* 1. 6, 7. But if we *walk* in the *light*, as he is in the *light*, we have *fellowship* one with another; and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son *cleanseth* us from all *sin*. And so much may be spoken of this passage, as it is considerable of us *distinctly*.

We may secondly look upon it in its *connexion* and *conjunction* of the *parts* of it with one another. And here two things more; First, The *Addition* of the *one* to the *other*; and secondly, The *Exclusion* of the *one* by the *other*. The *Addition* of the *one* to the *other*, that lies in this, That *walking* in the *Spirit* must be joined with *not walking* in the *flesh*. The *Exclusion* of the *one* by the *other*, that lies in this, That *walking* in the *flesh*, it does *take away* walking *after* the *Spirit*.

First (I say), Here is the *Addition* of the *one* to the *other*, in that *walking* *after* the *Spirit* must be joined with *not walking* *after* the *flesh*: It is not enough for any to abstain from *acts* of *wickedness*, but they must also and moreover perform *acts* of *goodness*. Therefore the Apostle did not *content* himself to make mention of the *one*, unless also he makes mention of the *other*; we must not only *abstain* from *evil*, but *do good*. Yea indeed, we cannot easily *do* the *one* without *doing* the *other*. Those that wilfully *neglect* their *duties*, will be apt to fall into the *contrary* *mis-carriages*.

Secondly, Here's the *Exclusion* of the *one* by the *other*. *Walking* in the *flesh*, it does *take away* walking *after* the *Spirit*. This is clear from the manner of speech and expression here in the Text: And it is agreeable also to other places of Scripture, where they are opposed one to the other, as *Gal.* 5. 16. *This then I say, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh: for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* And to *Phil.* 3. 19, 20, the *minding* of *earthly things*, and the *having* of our *conversation* in *heaven*, they are set one against the other. Therefore this shews the *fondness* of such persons who have a conceit with themselves to do both; think that they may serve *God* and the *Devil* both together. No, it will not be. There's no man that can serve *two Masters*; especially such kind of *Masters* as these are: But either he must *love* the *one*, and *despise* the *other*; or else he must *cleave* to the *one*, and *bate* the *other*. We cannot serve *God* and *Mammon* both at once; nor at the same time walk *after* the *Flesh* and *after* the *Spirit*. And so now I have done with the *first* general part of the Text, which is, The *Persons* mentioned; and that under a *double* description, whereby they are decyphered: First, Of their *state* and *condition*, such as are in *Christ Jesus*; and secondly, Of their *life* and *conversation*, who *walk* not, &c.

The Second is the *Priviledg* or *Benefit* belonging to these Persons; and that is freedom and exemption from *wrath* and *condemnation*; There is no *condemnation* to them. Those that are true *Believers*, which are *Regenerate* and the *children* of *God*, they are not liable to *Eternal Destruction*. This is the Point which we have here now before

before us. And it is the *Doctrine* of the whole Scripture in every Page of it. Thus *John* 3. 18. *He that believeth on Him is not condemned.* And *v.* 36. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life.* So *John* 5. 24. *He that heareth my words, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.* And again in *v.* 28. of the same Chapter, *They that have done good shall come forth into the Resurrection of life, as they that have done evil unto the Resurrection of Damnation.* *Revel.* 20. 6, *Blessed and Holy is he that hath part in the first Resurrection; on such the second Death hath no power.* All which places do evidently prove and confirm this Truth unto us.

Now for the better prosecution of it at this present time, we may look upon it as it lies here in the Text *three manner of ways* especially; First, In its *Specification*. Secondly, In its *Amplification*: And Thirdly, In its *Restriction* or Limitation. First, Take it in its *Specification*; *Those that are in Christ Jesus, &c.* And so we have a very good account of the Point given unto us from the words of the Text it self in the fore-mentioned Description of the Persons; to whom the Priviledg it self does belong, which is the *children of God* under a double *Qualification*: The one is of their *state and condition*; such as are in *Christ Jesus*; And the other is of their *life and conversation*; such as walk not after the *flesh* but after the *spirit*, and both *reduplicative*. Forasmuch as those who are *true believers* and *regenerate* they are in each of these *Circumstances*; therefore it cannot be that they should be liable to Condemnation.

We'll speak of each of them distinctly; and first of *the former*; To wit, of their *state and condition*: Therefore there is no condemnation to those *who are the children of God*; because those who are the *children of God*, they are in *Christ Jesus*, that is, (as I have formerly explain'd it) they are by Faith through the Spirit of God united to him, and made Members of him; these *persons* with whom it is *thus*, it is impossible that they should ever be damned.

This will appear to be so, and be made good upon a twofold Consideration; First, of what in this respect Christ hath *done* for them: and Secondly, of what in this respect Christ *is* to them.

First, In consideration of what Christ hath done for them. Those who are true Believers, and who are incorporated into *Christ Jesus*, Christ hath done that for them, which does absolutely and necessarily exempt them and free them from Condemnation.

As to instance in some Particulars; First, He hath by his Blood-shedding taken away the Guilt of sin from them: what's the *Guilt* of sin? It is the *Desert* of sin, which by order of Gods Justice does bind the sinner over to punishment. This now by *Jesus Christ* is taken away from *all believers*; *John* 1. 29, *Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.* Takes them away; how? not that they should not be in them, but that they should not be imputed to them; According to that of the *Psalmist*, in *Psal.* 32. 12. *Blessed is he whose Transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered. Blessed is he to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity.* This is that which Christ by his Death hath obtained for us; that sin should not be imputed to us. Thus *Isa.* 38. 17, He is said to cast our sin behind his back. And *Mic.* 7. 19, To cast all our sin

fin into the Depth or bottom of the Sea. This is that which we have signified in another place of this very Chapt. v. 33, 34. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, &c.* Christ hath satisfied the Justice of the Father for all his elect people by dying for them, so that now there is nothing which can be set or fastened upon their score. Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law being made a Curse for us, Gal. 3. 13.

Secondly, As he hath taken away the Guilt of sin from us, and freed us from condemnation in that respect; so he hath likewise imputed his righteousness to us, and freed us from condemnation; so likewise not only the Active Obedience of Christs life, but the integrity of our Nature in Christs Person being imputed to us, who by Faith are set into him, covereth our disobedience and the relicks of Corruption yet remaining in the best of us. And so being justified, we cannot therefore be condemned.

Thirdly, Christ hath fully answered the Law, which is the strength of sin, fully paying the Debt which was owing upon our account; both by enduring the penalty, and doing that which the Law requireth of us to be done by us. Rom. 10. 4. *Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* And the Surety having satisfied, the chief Debtor is thereby discharged. *Being justified by Faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,* Rom. 2. And thus we see how Christ hath freed us in consideration of what he hath done for us.

Now further, Secondly it is clear also that he hath done so from consideration of what he is to us. Those who are in Christ Jesus, they are ingrafted and incorporated into him; they are made members of him; and though not personally, yet mystically are all one with him; He is their Head, and they are his Body, as the Scripture declares them. Now in this respect also it is impossible that any of them should be condemned. If the Head live, the Members shall live also; and if Christ himself be free from condemnation, which cannot be denied, then those who are Members of Christ shall be free for his sake. For if the first fruits be holy, the lump is also; and if the root be holy, so are the branches, Rom. 11. 16. Look what is here done to Christ, it shall consequently be done to us also. And as he is glorified, so we also shall be glorified with him. And for him, God does now in the way of the New Covenant, convey all things to us through Christ. He justifies Christ, and in him justifies us; sanctifies Christ, and through him sanctifies us; glorifies Christ, and in him glorifies us. He saves us not only personally, as we are such and such particular men, Peter, or James, or John, considered in individuo; but also (as I have said) relatively, with respect had to his Son, as we are parts and members of the mystical Body of Christ, and are knit and united to him, as Members to the Head. And God loves Believers with the same love (in such a proportion) as he loves Christ himself, according to that Job. 17. 26. *I have declared thy name, &c. that the love wherewith thou lovest me, may be in them, and I in them.* And that's the first Branch of the Reduplication, as it is considerable in the state and condition. There's no Condemnation to those who are the Children of God, Because they are in Christ Jesus.

The second is from the *circumstance* of their *life and conversation*, Because *they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*. An holy Conversation *in life*, shall have an happy Condition *after life*; and there is no Condemnation at all which does follow upon it. Thus *Rom. 8. 13*, *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the Body, ye shall live*. So *Gal. 6. 8*, *They that sow to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; that is, Destruction; but they that sow to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting, &c.* So *Mat. 25. 46*. The wicked are said to go into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. Those that walk in the ways of salvation, they shall not come into a state of condemnation. And that's the first View of this Benefit or Priviledges belonging to Gods Children, of exemption from Condemnation, as it is considerable in the Reduplication both of the *condition and conversation* of the persons, so far forth as they are *in Christ Jesus*, and as *they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*.

The second View of this passage is in its *Amplification*; where we may again further take notice of a *two-fold extent*: The one is, the *extent* of the *priviledg* in the *universality* of the *expression*, *No condemnation whatsoever*. And the other is, the *extent* of the *persons* to whom the *priviledg* does belong, in the *indefiniteness* of the *expression*, *Those that are in Christ Jesus*, and that *walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, whosoever they be*.

First, Here is the *extent* of the Benefit or Priviledg it self in the *expression* of *universality*; There is *no* Condemnation whatsoever, *Nulla damnatio*. This is true according to *all* the *references* of it: First, As to the *ground or matter* of Condemnation, *There is no Condemnation, &c.* that is, There is nothing which does afford *occasion* hereunto. If there were *any* thing at all which *did* so, it must be *sin* and the *guiltiness* thereof: But forasmuch as this (as we have shew'n) is taken away by Christ from all his Members, Therefore there is *no* Condemnation to them in this *particular*. Neither *Original sin*, nor *Actual*; neither *sins past*, nor *sins present*; neither *lesser sins*, nor yet *greater*, can be *ground or matter* of Condemnation to the *Children of God*.

Secondly, In reference to the *Parties condemning*. *No Condemnation so neither*. Where there's no Body to condemn, there can be no Condemnation? Now this is the case of those who are true Believers. If it should be asked them, as Christ asked the *woman in the Gospel*, *Joh. 8. 11*. *Woman, where are these thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?* They might answer as she there did, *no man, Lord*; that is, none which dare to stand to their Condemnation; no more than there did Satan who is the Accuser of the Brethren; and evil men, who are *suborned* by Satan, they may sometimes be nibbling at them, but yet they cannot fasten any *solid Condemnation* upon them. All their Challenges and Accusations come to nought, for they are of no efficacy or validity at all. They conquer them, and have the *better* of them; and at last put to *silence the ignorance of foolish men*.

Thirdly, In reference to the *kinds* of Condemnation it self: Neither present nor future, neither Temporal nor Eternal. The *Papists* would have some Temporal Punishment due to Gods Children for their sins,

to be endured by them either here in *this World*, or in *Purgatory*. But being justified through Christ, there is no such thing belonging to them. He hath satisfied Gods justice for them (as we have heard), and so they are acquitted. The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment amuseth them, as it is *Verse 3*. That's the first *Extent* here considerable, *viz.* of the Priviledg it self in the *universality* of the expression, *No Condemnation*.

The *second* is of the *Persons* to whom the Priviledg does belong in the *indefiniteness* of the expression, *Those that are in Christ Jesus, and that walk*, &c. whosoever they be. This Priviledg of exemption from Hell and eternal damnation, is not restrained only to some few particular Christians, but to all *Saints and Believers in general* without exception.

The reason of it is this; Because *all are members of Christ*, one as well as another: The ground of freedom from condemnation, is the relation which we have to Christ, being one *with him*; and the work of sanctification also in us, as walking after the spirit. Now this, for the *substance* of it, is equally agreeable to *every believer*: Look as it is in the *natural body*, so is it likewise in the *mystical*. In the *natural body*, the *smallest part* of it is a member of the body, and hath life and influence from the Head as well as the *greatest*; and the *priviledges* of the body appertaining and belonging to it; the least *toe*, as well as the *whole leg*: Even so is it also in the *Mystical Body of Christ*, every true believer being a member of him, hath life and salvation from him.

This is matter of Comfort and Encouragement to the poorest and meanest Christian that hath the truth of Grace in him, That he is one who is accordingly freed from condemnation. The promise of salvation is not to the *degree* of Grace, but to the *reality*; not to the *improvements*, but to the *Principle it self*. *There is laid up for me* (says St. Paul) *a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but to all them that love his appearing*. The weakest believer hath an interest in eternal salvation as well as the greatest Apostle, even as the Apostle Paul himself.

This (that we may not abuse this Doctrine) is no ground for any to set themselves any *stint* or *measure* in Holiness, or the *Improvements of Grace* in them; no, but rather to *put on to perfection*, as the Apostle himself did for his particular, *Phil. 3. 13, 14*. Though the meanest Christian shall be *saved*; yet is it our concernment to *endeavour* to be the greatest as near as we can; and not only to be *free from Hell*, but to have the *best place in Heaven*: That which the Sons of *Zebedee* did affect out of, a spirit of curiosity in reference to the *End*, should be affected by every one of *us*, out of a spirit of zeal in reference to the *Means*.

For this purpose we must know *thus much*, That though every Christian shall be alike saved from condemnation; yet those which are *eminent* Christians, and do abound in Grace above others, they have an advantage of others in two particulars: First, In the degrees of *comfort* here in this world. And secondly, In the degrees of *Glory* in the world to come.

First, For the degrees of Comfort here in this world. Though *all* that are in Christ Jesus indefinitely, and which do truly walk in ways of holiness, they shall be freed from wrath absolutely, one as well as another; Yet the nearer and closer that *any* keep to Christ, and the more strongly that they walk in *his* ways, the *more* sweet encouragement and consolation shall they consequently receive from him, which shall be, as it were, the beginning of Heaven it self unto them. That's *one* thing considerable.

Secondly, For the degrees of *Glory* in the world to come: There shall be a difference *herein* also. Though all that are in Christ shall be saved; yet there shall be a greater measure of Glory proportioned to the *measure of Grace*, as an encouragement to Christians to labour so much the more to *abound in Grace*. Look then as it is in the world; Men do not only desire to *live*, but to *live well*; not only to have so much Estate as will keep them from *absolute want*; but to be in as good *plight* as may be: So here in point of salvation, Christians should not content themselves only to *escape Hell*, and to be absolutely free from condemnation, but to have as great a share in Glory and Happiness, as is agreeable to them.

But yet this is a comfort to those who fall short of such a degree of Grace notwithstanding their endeavours, That the lowest degree hath exemption from condemnation belonging to it. *There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus*, whosoever they are, high or low, rich or poor, *stronger Christians* or *weaker*, it is all one in this respect. That's the *extent of the persons*. And so we have the *second view* of the Text in the *Amplification*.

The *Third* and last is in the *Restriction or Limitation*, *To those who are in Christ Jesus*, and *who walk after the Spirit*, &c. and none besides. Whosoever they be that are not in Christ, nor do not walk and live answerably to *his Spirit*, they have no share at all in this *priviledg of exemption from condemnation*. No condemnation in Christ, *nothing but* condemnation *out of* Christ; take notice of that. Thus in *Mark 16. 16*, *He that believeth, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned*. And in *2 Thes. 2. 12*, *That they all might be damned which believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*. So *Job. 3. 36*, *He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*.

The ground of this truth is this, Because all the benefit which we have from Christ, flows (as I have formerly shewn you) from our *Union and communion* with him. As therefore in point of Sanctification, we have no life of *holiness* but from Christ; so also in point of Justification, we have no life of *righteousness* but from Christ neither. Look as that member can have no sense or influence from the head, which is not joined to the head; nor that branch can have no sap from the root, which is not joined and united to the tree, and continued with it; so that Christian can have no life, or happiness, or salvation from Christ, who is not *incorporated, and ingrafted, and put into Christ*. Therefore it is worth our observation what we meet withall in *Col. 1. 14*, where the Apostle speaking of Christ, has this expression, *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the for-*
giveness

givenness of sins. Mark here, that he does not say *by* whom, but *in* whom. *By* Christ; so the whole world may be said to receive redemption, in as much as he hath offered and laid down a sufficient ranfome and price for the *redemption of all*: but *in* Christ; so those only who are elect and true believers, have actual and efficacious redemption, because those alone are *in* him. This is Gods way of dispensation, to free those only from condemnation who are knit and united to his Son, and made lively members of him, and who lead such a life as is suitable and agreeable to him. And thus have we the Text in the third and last view of it, which is the *Restriction and Limitation*.

Now the Use and Application of all which hath been said, to our selves, may be reduced to two heads especially.

First, To matter of *Comfort and Consolation*.

Secondly, To matter of *Counsel and Admonition*.

For matter of *Comfort and Consolation*, first of all, Here is ground of very great encouragement and rejoycing to all true believers which are regenerate and born again, and *incorporated and united to Christ*, they are freed from *condemnation*; and upon that account, from the greatest evil that their *natures* are capable of. It is comfortable in the circumstance of a two-fold evil which is incident unto them, whether we speak of the evil of *sin*, or whether we speak of the evil of *affliction*.

First, If we speak of the evil of *sin*. Gods Children they are not wholly exempt from *this*, while they live here in this world. They have *sin* still abiding in them. Yea, but it is not in them *so*; as to expose them to *Condemnation* for all that. They are freed from the *guilt* of it; and they are freed from the *power* of it; and consequently, they are freed from the *judgment and punishment* which does belong to it likewise, which is *eternal wrath and Condemnation*. What a great advantage and happiness is this, if it be but duly and seriously considered!

Secondly, As to the evil of *affliction*. 'Tis a very great comfort and encouragement in *this* likewise. The Saints and Servants of God, while they live here in this world, they are subject to *various afflictions*; *Many are the afflictions of the righteous*, Psal. 34. 19. Yea, but as long as they are freed from *Condemnation*, this may very much satisfy and content them. Though no afflictions be joyous, but grievous, and Gods Children, so far forth as they do partake of flesh and blood, would very willingly and gladly be freed and exempted from them: Yet this is that which may support and uphold them in the midst of all, That it is all short of Hell. They may be *subject to affliction*, but they are not *capable of Condemnation*.

This (on the other side) is the misery of all wicked and ungodly persons. They scape many brunts and troubles sometimes here in the world. They are not in trouble as *other men*, nor plagued as *other men*; *Their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than their hearts can wish*: But God sets them in slippery places, and casts them down to destruction, as David speaks, Psal. 73. 18. *Their judgment lingreth not, and their damnation slumbers not*, as Peter speaks, 2 Pet. 2. 3. *They spend their days in jollity, and in a moment they go down to Hell*, [as the word *Sheol* will very well bear it] Job 21. 14. What will all their prosperity avail

them, when they are come to such a place as that is. But now the Children of God are freed and exempted from this in the midst of their greatest troubles.

There is a two-fold Consideration which may very much pacifie and satisfie Gods Children in this particular: The *one* is, That they are freed from Condemnation *notwithstanding* Afflictions. And the *other* is, That they are freed from Condemnation *by* Afflictions; that *though* they are *afflicted*, yet they are not *condemned*; and that *because* they are *afflicted*, therefore they are not *condemned*.

First, That though they are *afflicted*, yet they are not, nor shall not be *condemned*. Freedom from Condemnation may swallow all other evils and inconveniences whereunto they are exposed; and they may be very well content in such circumstances to submit unto them. As men patiently bear the loss of *their goods*, where they are preserved from the loss of *their lives*. The thoughts of the *one* do much *qualifie* and *extenuate* the *other*.

Secondly, That *because* they are *afflicted*, therefore they are not *condemned*. Their *present Affliction* secures them from *future Condemnation*. This is that which the Apostle Paul does expressly declare unto us there in that place, in 1 Cor. 11. 31, *When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world*. And again 2 Cor. 4. 17, *This light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*. This is not to be understood by any meritorious Virtue in the Affliction it self; as if the enduring of such and such troubles did immediately, and *ex opere, operato*, exempt men from Condemnation: But because *occasionally* from these Afflictions God does subdue his *Childrens corruptions*, and sanctifying these Providences to them, does thereby *fit* them for *eternal salvation*. He thereby qualifies them, and *makes them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light*, Col. 1. 12. Gods Children even here in this life, may be assured of their salvation for the time to come; and may now say, That there is no Condemnation unto them. And thus for the *word of Consolation*.

The second Improvement of this point, is in a way of *Counsel* and *Admonition*; And that to a twofold purpose and effect: First, To be careful to make good our *interest in Christ*. And secondly, To be careful to order aright our *lives and conversations*.

First, For our *interest in Christ*; to look to that. Seeing there is no *Condemnation to those*, and to those alone, *who are in Christ Jesus*: Therefore it must nearly concern us, to *take care* that we are indeed *united to him*, and such as are truly *in him*. The Apostle himself has given us an unquestionable Character of it, in 2 Cor. 5. 17, *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, &c.* There is a *thorough change* and *alteration* wrought in him, in opposition to what he was by *Nature*; and he is become a *new man*. He is made agreeable and conformable to Christ in the Principles and Dispositions which are in him, which it behoves us all in a *special manner* to find in *our selves*. Here is that which may persuade us to close with Christ, and to *come into him*. That without him we cannot be saved; and unless we are *married to him*, we cannot be free from *eternal damnation*.

Secondly,

Secondly, For the regulating and well-ordering of our Conversation. Here is that which may persuade us to *this* likewise: That we walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Both as an evidence of our interest in Christ, That we are indeed Members of him; And likewise as a security to us for our freedom from eternal Judgment. Mens condition hereafter will be according to their Conversation here. Those who walk as the Enemies of Christ, their end is Damnation, in Phil. 3. 18. And in vain do any pretend to have any Union or Communion with him, who are not careful of themselves in this particular: For which reason they are here in the Text joyned both together, *Who are in Christ Jesus, and who walk not, &c.*

There are a great many of people in the world, who make account, when they come to dye, to go to heaven, and to be made partakers of salvation: But it will be a sad and miserable thing for them to be frustrated and disappointed, and to be hurried to another place; which will prove to be the lot of all Atheists, and Hypocrites, and Unbelievers, and Profane Persons, who will not suffer Christ to rule over them, nor take no care at all to frame their lives according to his Laws and Precepts. It is good for us all therefore to be upon sure terms in this particular, by making good to our selves the Conditions and Qualifications which are here mentioned in the Text, as requisite in those which shall be saved. And to take the Priviledg together with the Persons to whom it belongs; as we have now heard it explain'd. There is therefore now no Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

SERMON II.

ROMANS 8. 2.

For the Law of the Spirit of Life which is in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death.

There is a twofold Power or Tyranny which is considerable in the Nature of Sin: There's the Commanding Power, and the Condemning. The Commanding, whereby it carries on the Sinner to the Transgression of Gods Law: And the Condemning, whereby it binds over the Sinner to Punishment upon that Transgression. And accordingly there is a twofold Benefit which all Believers do partake of from Christ: There's the Benefit of Justification, in the acquitting and absolving of their Persons: And there's the Benefit of Sanctification in the killing and subduing of their Corruptions: And both of them here exhibited to us in this Verse, which we have now before us as a confirmation of what was premised in the Verse immediately going before. There the Apostle had told us, That there was no Condemnation to them that were in Christ Jesus; And he proves that from this, Because the Law of the Spirit of Life which is in Christ Jesus, hath made them free from the Law of Death. And again, he had also told us, That those who were in Christ Jesus, they walked not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; And that he proves from this, Because the Law of the Spirit of Life which is in Christ Jesus, hath made them free from the Law of Sin. This is the Coherence of the Text.

NOW in the Text it self there are two general Parts observable: First, The miserable Estate and Condition of all men by Nature. Secondly, The happy Recovery and Restauration of Believers by Grace. The misery of all men by Nature, that is implied in these words, *The Law of Sin and of Death.* The Recovery of Believers by Christ, that is express in these words, *The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free, &c.*

We begin with the first General, viz. The misery of all men by Nature. And that it consists of a state of Bondage and Captivity, wherewith they are intral'd, which is here in this Scripture call'd the Law of Sin

sin and death. Every man by nature is a *slave*, and in *thralldom* to each of these *Enemies*. We shall speak *distinctly* of them; And first, of the *former* of them, *viz. The Law of sin.* *Sin*, in those which are *unregenerate*, does exercise a *Tyrannical Power*, and *Dominion*, and *Authority* over them; therefore it hath the denomination of a *Law* given unto it; not that it hath any thing which is good, or *lawful*, or regular in it, for it is properly the *transgression* of a *Law*, even of the *Law of God*. But it is call'd a *Law* in regard of that *sway* and *rule* which it bears in the hearts of all those that are intangled with it: That like as a *Law* hath a *vertue* and *efficacy* with it, for the *commanding* of all those who are within the verge and compass of it; so hath *sin* a *commanding power* over all those that *submit* themselves to it; it leads them, and draws them, and carries them on to whatsoever it *pleases*; so that they cannot do what *they should*, nor *abstain* from that which is *forbidden* and *prohibited* to them. This is the condition of *sin*, that it does *subire rationem legis*, carries with it the nature of a *Law* to the *subjects* of it.

This it may be conceived to do, according to a *two-fold explanation*: First, As it acts *constantly* and *unweariedly*. And secondly, As it acts *powerfully* and *irresistibly*.

First, In the *constant* actings of it; *Sin* is like a *Law* so. Things which are acted by *Law*, they are acted with a great deal of *constancy*. It is their usual and wonted course, to do that which is done by them. Thus we see in the *Law of Nature*, and the *course* which is set them, it is *constant* and *perpetual*. The *Ordinances* of *Heaven* and *Earth*, the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars*, they keep their course by a *settled Decree* which is upon them. And the *Sea* it keeps within its *bounds* by that *Law* which God hath given unto it, *that it shall not pass*, *Psal.* 104. 9. and 248. 6. Even so is it also with those who are carried by this *Law of sin*; it is that which is usual with them, They make a *constant course* and *practise* of it, as their *trade* and *life*.

Secondly, It hath the notion of a *Law*, in that men are carried to it *powerfully*, and *irresistibly*, without opposition. The *Law* it is *uncontroulable*; There's no declining it, or setting against it, but it must necessarily be *received* and *embraced* without more a-do. So is *Sin* to an *unregenerate person*, it *commands* him, and has power over him; it *rules* and *reigns* in him, and he does *obey it in the lusts thereof*, *Rom.* 6. 12. It is true both of *Original sin* and *Actual*, of the *sin of Nature*, and of the *sins of Life* also; As a *strict* and *severe Master* has his servants *under his command* to do whatsoever he *injoyns* them, so has *sin* and *corruption* carnal men to be subject and obedient to it self.

This is first of all grounded upon that *curse* which was laid upon man for his *first Rebellion*. Man was at the first made *free*, and had a liberty granted unto him, which if he had pleased, he might have kept still; but by wilful transgression of Gods Commandment, he from hence became a *servant of servants*, as was the curse of wicked *Cham*. He is from hence in *thralldom* and servitude to every base and filthy *lust*, which does exercise *dominion* over him, so long as he remains in this his *carnal and unregenerate condition*, which he may *thank himself*

for. There's no such *slaves alive* as those who are slaves *voluntarily*, which do *inthrall* and *enslave themselves*; such as these shall be sure to have *enough* of it, and to feel the misery and inconvenience of it; and such a kind of slave is *man* occasionally since his first departure from God; He hath lost that *primitive liberty* which was bestowed upon him.

But then further besides this, secondly, Sin gets a great deal of *power* by *custom*, which has the force of a *second nature* with it, and in that regard the notion of a *Law*. Besides the strength of *original corruption*, which is inherent in men at first, there is a further *enlargement* of this in them by their yeeldings and submissions to it upon *all occasions*. The more that any men sin, the more still they *may* sin, and the more still they *will* sin, if they look not the better to it. Take any sin whatsoever which men by custom are wedded to, and they know not well how to leave it, or to rid themselves of it, but are most miserably intangled with it, and in bondage to it. *His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his own sins*, as it is in *Prov. 5. 22*. The *Ethiopian* may as soon change his skin, and the *Leopard* his spots, as they may cease to do evil that are accustomed to it.

This will appear and be made good in the particular instances of it; For there are sins of divers kinds and specifications, which men are guilty of; and every carnal person especially has some predominant lust or other which does prevail and bear sway in him; and where it does so, it does it in a very severe and *tyrannical manner*. There's no such Tyrant as *Lust*, where it gets hold upon the heart of a sinner: No, there is no such slave as a sinner, where he is under the *power and tyranny of Lust* getting mastery over him. Ye may see it (I say) in sundry exemplifications. Take it in the sin of *unclean-ness*, that sin which (the more the shame) does so much abound at this present time in *the world*; how pitifully does it *captivate* such persons as are given up to it, insomuch as they do very seldom, if ever, get loose of it? The Harlot is a deep ditch (says *Solomon*), and those that fall into it, do very hardly get out of it again, *Prov. 23. 27*. *None that go unto her, return; neither take they hold on the paths of life*, *Prov. 2. 29*. And the same Author gives the reason of it in another place, *Because her heart is snares and nets, and her hands are bands*, *Eccles. 7. 26*. And accordingly this sin does disquiet those who are addicted to it, as *Amnon* his lust it made him sick, and took away his rest: such a *servant and slave* was he to it. So likewise for his *Covetousness* and *Ambition*: We may observe oftentimes the tyranny of such lusts as these, to what strange and desperate courses they will carry men for the accomplishment of them, to the hazard of every thing which should be dear and precious to them. For these, *Judas* would not stick to *sell Christ*, nor *Balaam* to lay a snare for Gods people.

What will not men do for *Revenge*, and to satisfy their unruly desires and affections in that particular, even to the laying aside of all *Humanity and Civility whatsoever*. I might never have done with instances in this particular; but some few may suffice for all the rest:

All

All to shew us *thus much*, even in what a *bondage and slavery men* are, that are addicted to any *sinful course or lust* which does take place and rule in them.

The consideration of this present point now before us, may serve especially as an *awakening* of all men, who are yet abiding and remaining in their Natural condition; That they may take notice of the *miserable estate and condition* in which at present they are. They are under the power and dominion of Sin, which is the greatest slavery that is in the world. Not only *simply* Sinners, but under the *power and dominion* of Sin; take notice of *that*. Sin it has them at its *beck and command*, to do whatever it *pleases*. As it was with the *Centurion* in the Gospel to his *Servants*; so it is with *Sin* likewise to its *Servants*; it says unto them *go*, and they *go*; *come*, and they *come*; *do this*, and they *do it*. There are but two parts of a Commanding Power, *Restraint and Impulsion*: To *hinder* and to *keep off* from doing any thing, and to *inforce* and *put upon* doing. And they do both of them occur and meet together in that *Tyranny* which Sin doth exercise over a carnal and unregenerate person. *The good which we should do, we do not*; and *the evil which we should not do, that we do*. Indeed a wicked man does not do all kind of evil at once, neither does it actually break out in him; but he may sometimes be employed in such actions as are materially good: But yet this does not at all *exempt* him from this *servitude and bondage* which we now speak of. He is a Slave for all this. And that because his Heart, and Mind, and Spirit is carried out after it. There's no man that is in his *natural condition* that is absolutely free from *any Sin or Corruption* whatsoever it be; but upon occasion will very easily fall into it, and be transported with it. Look as a godly man, from the work of the new Creature in him, is ready to *every good work*; so a wicked man, from the *principle* of Sin in him, is exposed to *every evil one*. A godly man has *power* even over those sins which by *chance* he falls into: And a wicked man, he is in slavery even to *those* sins which by *chance* he abstains from. This does express that *bondage and captivity* in which he is unto us.

Now for the further *illustration* of it (for it is a point which can never be too much explained and amplified), we may take notice of the *misery of this bondage* in these following Aggravations.

First, In the *subject* of this Thralldom; And that is the *Soul it self*, The *immortal Soul*, That part of man which had the *Image of God* in a special manner *imprinted* upon it. For *this* to be in slavery and servitude, is a very sad business indeed. We know in the way of the world, how *bondage is usually aggravated* from the *quality and condition* of the *Person* that is brought into it. For a man of *note and eminency* to be led captive is more than for a *meaner* man. And so it is here: The *Body* that has its share in this *captivity*; but the *Soul* is that which is *mainly and principally* concerned in it. And the *will* also, which is the noblest and most *excellent faculty* of it. What a pity is it, that this which is *made and ordained* for *better things*, should cleave to such *base matters* as the *ways of sin*!

Secondly, Consider it also in the *Persons* which men are in thralldom to by it: And that is to *Satan* and his Instruments. For a man to be in bondage to a *stranger*, it is not very *desirable*; but to be in bondage to

an *enemy* or *adversary*, is very *abominable*. Now this is also the *case* and *condition* here. Those that are in thralldom to *sin*, they are in bondage to *Satan*, who is an *insolent* and *malicious enemy*, and who will be sure with a great deal of scorn to *triumph* over them for it, as the *Philistins* did over *Sampson*. There is nothing more pleasing to him, than to get men into his snares, and to lead them captive at his will, and then to *laugh* at them for it; which is very irksome to any *ingenuous mind*.

Thirdly, There is an aggravation also in it, from the nature, and quality, and condition of the *servitude*: it *self*, in all the circumstances of it. Of *all servants*, we count *them* to be in the worst case that are *sold*; And of those who are *sold*, they are the worst that do serve in *Prison*; And of those who are in *Prison*, they are worst who are bound with *fetters* and *chains*. Now all this is the state and condition of *unregenerate persons*, and who are the *servants of sin*, they are *sold under sin*, *shut up in unbelief*, bound with the *cords* and *chains* of their own *iniquities*, as the *Scripture* expresses it to us.

To this we may further add, the *insensibleness* of this their condition, which is usually attendant hereupon. We count them most *desperately miserable*, who *discern* not the *misery* which they are in; As *mad men* that *sing* in their *chains*, and are *jocund* in the midst of their *distractions*, we reckon their conditions to be the *saddest* of all other. Now this for the most part is the case of such persons as those who are in *bondage to sin*; They do not apprehend or take notice of the misery under which they lie, but are as full of *mirth* and *jollity* notwithstanding, as if there were no such matter. This makes their *condition* the more *lamentable*; and that very thing it *self*, which they reckon and esteem to be their advantage, it is indeed and in reality the greatest prejudice and mischief unto them, and which does them the greatest harm of *any thing else besides*. What is that which the world does commonly look upon as the greatest advantage? It is this, that *they may do as they list*, without *controul*: That they may enjoy all opportunities for the acting and accomplishment of their lusts, and never be restrained. Why this now, if it be duly thought of and considered, it is the *greatest misery* that can be, and the *greatest bondage* that can be. Look by how much the more a *man's will* is let loose in evil, so much the more is he *ensnared* by it. The more *liberty* in sin, the more *bondage* to it. Whiles such *promise* themselves *liberty*, they are from hence the *Servants of corruption*; For of whom a *man is overcome*, of the same is he brought in *bondage*, as the Apostle *Peter* speaks, 2 Pet. 2. 19. And again the Apostle *Paul*, Rom. 6. 16. *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield your selves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?* And so much may be spoken of the first Branch of a *Natural man's captivity*, as it is considerable in his *thralldom to evil*, express'd here in the Text by the *Law of Sin*.

The second is as it is considerable in his *obligation to punishment*; And that is here also express'd by the *Law of Death*; which is added and joyned to the other, and goes along with it. Sin and Death they are *Concomitants*; and the one does *unseparably* and *undividedly* attend upon the other. This is another thing which is here observable of us; And it is that which the *Scripture* confirms in other places of it, *The wages of Sin is Death*, Rom. 6. 23.

There's

There's a threefold Death which the Scripture makes mention of. And they are all of them the wages of Sin: First, *Natural Death*, which consists in the separation of the Soul from the Body. This is that which is so much Death, as that worldly men think there's no other Death but *that*; There is no other which they are sensible, or apprehensive of, as inconvenient to them. But this they are now and then afraid of. Now this it hath Sin for the *rise* and occasion of it; and so the Apostle himself tells us, *Rom. 5. 12. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

Secondly, There is also a *Spiritual Death*, which consists in a deprivation of the Image of God upon the Soul, and the withdrawing of his favour from it. When a man is void of all grace and comfort too, he is then thus far in a state of Death, *Dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. 2. 1.* And this was another thing which was contracted from mans *sin at first*: as he was hereby put into a *mortal* condition in regard of his Body; so he was likewise put into a *spiritual deadness* in regard of his Soul. And so is every man else by Nature from him. Take a man without grace and holiness, and let him have never so much liveliness otherwise, he is but a *dead man*.

Thirdly, There is *Eternal Death* also, which consists in the separation of Soul and Body from God for ever *in Hell*. This is in Scripture called the *second Death* emphatically, as following upon the *first*, to all those that are out of Christ: *I looked, says St. John, and beheld a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him, Rev. 6. 8.* Here's the misery of all indeed to unregenerate persons; Not only *Death*, but *Hell* at the heels of it. If it were no more but the *Death of the Body*, the separation of the Soul from it, there would not be that *grievousness* in it, (though *nature* has its reluctancies *there* also) but this is that which aggravates it, That *Eternal Death* is consequent upon it. And so Death in all the *kinds* of it, as we have now *opened* and explained it to you. Not only *Death*, but the *Law* of *Death*, which does imply the *unavoidableness* of it.

Therefore let us accordingly look upon Sin and Death in this Conjunction. Let us not separate or divide these things which God hath thus put together: But in all temptations to the one, think of the other. When Satan would at any time persuade us to any thing which is sinful or unlawful; Let us then remember with our selves the punishment which is consequent upon it. And though if it comes not presently; yet be assured that it will come at last, if we look not to it. As the seed is, so is the harvest; *They that sow to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption.* Indeed Satan would sometimes persuade us otherwise, as he did once our first Parents, telling them, that *they should not dye*, although they should sin: But as he was a Liar then in that first suggestion, so he is a Liar still in all suggestions of the like nature with it. And therefore let us not believe him, nor be persuaded by him, but rather attend to the words of *Truth*, as they are here exhibited to us in this Scripture, which teaches us contrary.

And let us remember also to take it in its full scope and latitude, and extent. Death in all the kinds of it. And especially *Eternal Death*,

which is the greatest of all. Be mindful of this. Think what it is to enjoy the *pleasures of sin for a season*, and to lye roaring for ever in *Hell* for it, which is the punishment of it; and make these things *real* to our souls, as indeed they are *in themselves*; and will one day *prove* so, notwithstanding all the contrary imaginations of prophane and Atheistical persons, which are in thraldom to their base lusts.

In the time of this present life, whiles men are so intent as they are upon the prosecution of their *vile affections*, they have little leisure to consider *with themselves* the punishment which does belong unto it. But *hereafter* they shall be made sensible of it, and that to their *cost*. For which reason it is good and safe for them to prevent it by their *own Meditations*, and the embracing of such points as these are which are presented unto them. The way to escape Hell *at last*, is to believe it *afore-hand*. And the way to keep from it, is by *shunning* such ways as do lead and tend unto it. Otherwise, those that are in *the way*, they will at last come to the *journeys-end*; for these two they are by Gods appointment and ordination joyned together, *Iniquity* and *Destruction*. And so now I have done with the *First general part* of the Text, which is the miserable estate and condition of all men by nature, implied in these words, *The Law of sin and death*.

The Second is the *happy recovery* and *restoration* of Believers by *Grace*, in these words, *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free*. This, it cannot be well separated and divided from the other; and therefore as they are join'd in the Text, so they shall also with Gods assistance be join'd together in *our Discourse*. In this passage before us there are two Branches distinctly considerable: First, *The Remedy* it self which is here mentioned, and that is, *the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus*. Secondly, *The efficacy* of this Remedy, or the Benefit which comes by it, *Hath made me free from the law of, &c.*

First, Here's *the Remedy it self*, which is mention'd, *The law of the spirit of life which is, &c.* Where, first, of the *meaning* of the words; And then of the *Points* themselves which are deducible from them. For the *meaning of the words*. First, There are three terms here before us; There's *life*; And the *spirit of life*; And the *law of the spirit*. By *life* here we are to understand the *grace of holiness and sanctification*: Not that which is wrought and inherent in our nature being regenerate; but that *full and perfect holiness* which is in the *humane nature of Christ* as the proper subject of it. This is the *fountain* from whence is a continual flowing of Grace to all that are united to *Christ*. By the word *spirit* join'd to *life*, we are to understand either the *Original*, because it is wrought by the spirit; or the *activity* and *intention* of it. For *spirit*, it is a word of *emphasis*, and being added to any thing, does serve to denote the *eminency* and *perfection* of it. Thus Rev. 11. 11, *The spirit of life coming from God, shall enter into them*. By the law of the spirit we are to understand the *power* and *efficacy* of it. For *law*, it is a word of *command*, and hath prevalency with it. So then, the meaning of this present passage is briefly this: That the efficacy and power of that

Grace

Grace and Holiness wherewith the *living and quickning spirit of God* hath filled the humane nature of *Jesus Christ*, it hath freed me, and thee, and all others that are *in Christ*, from the power of our sinful and deadly *corruption of nature*. This is the meaning of the words. Now the point which is here observable of us, is thus much, *That in the human nature of Christ, there is a law of the spirit of life. There is a fulness and sufficiency of all grace and holiness in Christ, considered as he was Man.*

This the Scripture does sufficiently intimate and confirm unto us in sundry places of it; as in *Col. 1. 19, It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell*: That is, both the fulness of the *Godhead* spoken of afterwards in the second chap. ver. 9. *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*. As likewise the fulness of *habitual grace*, which is spoken of here in this Text, *The law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus*. So also *Col. 2. 3, In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*. In *Job. 1. 14, The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, &c. full of grace and truth*. So *Psal. 45. 7, God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladness above thy fellows*. *Joh. 3. 34, God gave him not the spirit by measure*. These and the like places do shew the sanctification of *Christ's human nature*, and the filling it with all *Grace*.

This was requisite thus to be, upon a twofold ground and consideration especially: First, In regard of the *personal union* of his *humane nature* with his *divine*. Forasmuch as the *Manhood* was to be joined to the *Godhead*, it was requisite that it should in some sort partake of that *Nature* which it was to be joined unto. If *Moses* conversing with God for a while, and at so great a distance, did partake of the reflexions of his *Glory and Brightness*, which shone in his face; How much more must the *Son of God*, who was join'd in one Person with God, and had so near conjunction with him, have the reflections of his Beauty upon him; forasmuch as God himself is the *Fountain and Original* of Grace? The Soul of *Christ* being so near him, could not but somewhat participate of that Grace, and that in very great abundance; as those Bodies which are nearest to the Sun, do most partake of the *Light* which is in it.

Secondly, As this was requisite in regard of his *Personal union*; so also in regard of his *work of Mediatorship*: for the performance and accomplishment thereof, it was necessary that he should be indued with a fulness of all grace for this likewise; and that upon this consideration, That so he might derive grace and holiness to us. *Christ* was a *publick Person*, who was to make others happy with him; and therefore was to have such a sufficiency, as that he might convey happiness to them; which he could not have otherwise done, than by being completely holy himself. In *Eph. 4. 7*, it is said, *That to every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ*. *Christ* was to have grace in him, not only in the nature of a *Vessel*, by way of capacity; but likewise in the nature of a *Fountain*, by way of communication; therefore he had a fulness of grace in him, and the law of the spirit of life in the absolute perfection of holiness; and that for this end, that he might be a perfect and absolute Mediator.

For the better opening and unfolding of this present point unto us, and the more *distinct* apprehending of it, we may look upon this *spirit of life in Christ*, as referring to the work of his *Mediatorship* two manner of ways; The one is in the *preparations* of it; and the other is in the *executions*. In the *preparations* of it, as qualifying him for it; And in the *executions*, as enabling him in it.

First, Take it in the *preparatory reference*; And so the *spirit of life in Christ*, it did fit him, and dispose him, and qualifie him for the work of the *Mediatorship*. This we may conceive it to have done in these respects: First, In the sanctifying of the flesh of Christ in the womb of the *Virgin*, for the *stay* and *stoppage* of the propagation of *original corruption*, and the guilt of *Adams* sin. Every man that comes into the world after the *ordinary course of generation*, hath besides the nature of man, the *very guilt and corruption of Nature* conveyed unto him. Now for the *prevention* of this evil in *Christ*, God in great wisdom appointed that he should be conceived by the *Holy Ghost* without any manner of generation by *man*; by which means he took *substance* from the *Virgin*, *without the guilt and corruption* of that substance: according to that in *Luke 1. 55*, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* This was requisite so to be, as the *foundation* of his acceptance and *satisfaction*. Unless the Nature of Christ had been *sanctified*, his Death could not have *satisfied*, nor his Sufferings could not have been *accepted*: And therefore in order hereunto did the *Spirit of God*, who is the *Spirit of Life* do this for him; It *sanctified* the humane Nature of Christ, and quickened that *lump* of flesh which he took upon him.

Secondly, It also *dignified* this Nature, and advanced it above all other *Creatures*. According to the *Law of Creation*, so the Nature of Man is far inferior to the Nature of *Angels*, which have a more *noble and excellent Being* pertaining unto them: But according to the *Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ*, so it is far transcendent and superior to it. As a woman that by *birth* is far inferior to another, yet by *marriage* may be *advanced above her*; even so is the case with us here in this Dispensation of Christ: He took not upon him the Nature of *Angels*, but he took upon him the *Seed of Abraham*, *Heb. 2. 16*. Therefore is our Nature, by virtue of its Union with the *Divine Nature* in one person, preferred above the nature of such *glorious Creatures* as those are, and hereby *advanced*.

Thirdly, This *Spirit of Life in Christ*, it did also fill his *Humane Nature* with as much Grace as it was *capable of*; and with all these *perfections* whereunto the Nature of Grace does *reach* and extend it self. For whereas in *other men* (and such as we *our selves* are) there is found a *certain division* and distribution of Graces; so that *this* man is endow'd with this Grace; and another man is endowed with *another*; in Christ there is a *concurrence* of all Graces and Vertues that can be *thought of*. And again, whiles *other men* for that Grace which they have, they have it in a less measure and degree; in Christ, it is in the *highest of all*; it is *unlimited* both in respect of the *kinds* of Grace, and likewise in respect of *degrees*. And thus is this *Spirit of Life*

con-

considerable in its *Preparations* to the work of *Mediatorship*.

Again further, secondly, It is also considerable in the *executions* and *transactions* of it. Whatever Christ did as Mediator, he was more particularly *enabled* hereunto from this *Spirit of Life*. As First of all, It was this which *quickened* him, and encouraged him in his *entrance* upon it. There were many *difficulties* in the *work it self*; which in their own nature were apt to *discourage* and to divert him from it, and to tempt him to put it off: But this *spirit* would not suffer him to do so; but rather *animated* him, and *hearten'd* him to it, and *drew him on*, and put him upon it.

Secondly, It likewise *sustain'd* him, and upheld him in the very performance it self. Therefore it was that he did not *give out* in his *Sufferings*, nor faint, nor sink under them; Because he was supported by this powerful Spirit which was in him. Hence it was also, that there was never any interruption of the *Personal Union*, Because there was never any removal or separation of this Spirit. For while the *Body and Soul of Christ* were separated; yet the *two Natures*, to wit, the *Godhead* and *Manhood* were never divided or separated from each other, but *continued* and *united*.

Thirdly, In that moreover it at last *revived* him, and *raised him from the dead*. Here it was a *Spirit of Life* indeed; A *quickening Spirit*. Thus *Rom. 1. 4.* He was declared to be the *Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead*. Thus we see in all these particulars, how the *Law of the Spirit of Life* was in *Christ*, and to what effect.

The consideration of this point (for the Improvement of it to our selves) is matter of great Comfort and Encouragement to us; and that especially as to the *exaltation of our Nature*, in a way of *qualification* of its former *abasement*. Our Nature which was once *debased* by Sin, is now *exalted* by Grace. *Adam* he brought down our Nature; and subjected it to a great deal of disparagement by his *Transgression*: But *Christ* by his *Purity* and *Holiness* hath *set it up*, and taken off that disparagement from it which was formerly upon it. Our Nature which is *defiled in us*, it is *pure in Christ*, and the purity of his Nature is imputed to us, as if it were *our own* in our particular persons. This is a very great benefit and priviledg if it be rightly considered and thought upon, as it seldom is, yet ought to be, That not only our *Persons* are reconciled now to God through Christ, but likewise our *Nature*, which out of Christ is *odious* to him, and not to be endured. The *pollution* and *defilement* of Nature, it is a business which many regard not, nor are affected with it; Although upon the *point* it is the main business of all, and the *Fundamental quarrel and controversy* which God hath with us. But now in Christ it is taken up; and our Nature in him is as pure and undefiled in Gods sight; and we our selves in reference to our Natures thus *qualified*, as well accepted of Him, as if we had been born without any corruption of Nature at all in us, and without any Original defilement. And therefore (by the way) we should take heed of *de-basing* it further by *Actual* miscarriages.

Again further, Here's comfort as to the point of *continuance* of Grace, and *perseverance* in it. Forasmuch as that Grace and Holiness which

we now partake of under the Gospel, it is in *good and safe hands*. The grace which we had given us in *Adam*, we lost it, and parted with it, and so very well *might*, because it was such as was put into our *own hands*, and depended upon our *own* happiness. But that grace which we have now in the *New Covenant*, we have it upon better and surer terms, being such as is now rooted in *Christ*, as the *proper subject* of it. This *Law of the spirit of life*, it is in *Christ Jesus*; it is in him *first* as the *Original*; and it is in him *last* as the *keeper*, and *preserver*, and *maintainer* of it.

And so much may be spoken of the *first Branch* of this second General in the Text, to wit, The Remedy it self which is here mentioned, *The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*.

The Second is the efficacy of this Remedy upon *St. Paul* and all other believers, *Hath made me free from the law of sin and death*. Where the Remedy is as large as the Disease, and the Plaster as broad as the sore. The Law of sin and death, that (as we heard before) was his *misery*; and his freedom from each of these, that is his *happiness*. The point which we gather from this passage, comes to this: *That there is a full and sufficient power in the holiness and purity of Christ's Nature, to free us both from the commanding and condemning power of sin*. Here's the Law of the Spirit in opposition to the Law of the *Flesh*; and the Law of Life in opposition to the Law of *Death* in us.

There are two distinct branches and parts (as we see) of this privileged: First, There's the freedom of *Justification*. And Secondly, The freedom of *Sanctification*: And both of them conveyed to us from the *pure and holy Nature of Christ*, and the *law of the Spirit of Life* which is in him.

First, As to matter of *Justification*: This Holiness of Christ, it frees us from the Law of *death and condemnation*. And here's a true account of that point which we have formerly handled; *That there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*: Why is there no condemnation to such persons as these are? Namely, because the righteousness of Christ is *imputed* to them, and reckoned and accounted as *theirs*; not only his *active obedience*, whereby he *fulfilled the law* for our sakes; but also his *habitual holiness* is *ours* likewise; And the *perfect sanctification* of our Nature, as it is *assumed into his Person*, is imputed unto us for our acceptance in the sight of God. Look as if *Adam* had stood still in the state of *Innocency*, and had retained that *integrity of nature* which was then bestowed upon him at first, God would then never have condemned him, because there would then have been no ground or matter of condemnation in him: So a Believer laying hold upon *Christ*, and being by Faith united to him, he shall not be condemned neither; because being *mystically* one with *Christ*, he partakes of the *perfect holiness* and purity of *Christ's Nature*, and is upon as good (yea better terms) in point of innocency, than he was indeed in his first creation, the grace of Christ being far transcendent to the grace of *Adam*.

But secondly, It holds good in point of *Sanctification* likewise: The pure and holy Nature of Christ is the spring and original of all holiness in us. And of his fulness do we all receive and grace for grace, as the Apostle tells us, *Joh. 1. 12*. The Spirit of God does not bestow grace upon us immediately, but he bestows it upon us through *Christ*. First, He

he sanctifies the *humane nature of Christ*, and then he sanctifies *us* who are members of him. We have grace as it were at the rebound, and by derivation from him: As the plenty in the Land of Egypt, it was conveyed through the hand of Joseph; and as the Oyl upon the head of Aaron ran down to the skirts of his Garment. This is that which enables us to good; this is that which preserves us from evil. This law of the spirit of life in Christ, it frees us not only from death, but also from sin.

The Use of all this to our selves, comes to this: First, As matter of great Comfort and Consolation to us in each of these evils, whether of Death, or of Sin: We should lay up such Truths as these are, against the hour of trial and temptation. When Satan shall be ready to assault us, and to object the filthiness, and vileness, and corruption of our nature to us, let us here answer him with the Holiness of Christ; Though our nature be defiled as it is in us, yet it is pure in him; and there is greater force and efficacy in the Holiness of Christ to save us, where we do rightly make use of it, and improve it; than there is in our own unholiness to condemn us, or to keep us from salvation.

Secondly, It should teach us to go to Christ for this freedom here mentioned, and to acknowledg him in it; we should do it in point of Justification, and in case of trouble of mind for sin; Take the right course to expedite our selves out of such perplexities, by making use of the Grace of Christ. Do not think to do it by reflecting upon any goodness of our own, but upon that Goodness and Holiness which is in him; which being made ours by faith, shall to this purpose be available for us.

And so in point of Sanctification likewise: In all the strength and prevalency of sin and corruption in us, let us fetch power from Christ to subdue it, and to free us from the dominion of it; and in all difficulties and obstructions of duty, let us fetch power from his spirit likewise to overcome the difficulties of them, and to knock off those bands and fetters that are upon us. Let us set one Law against another for our furtherance and advantage; The law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, against the law of sin. Let us not look upon sin so much as it is inherent in us, as it is undertaken by Christ, both to take away the guilt of it, and also to take away the power.

And finally; Let us learn from hence to bless God for Christ, and give him the glory of his own Holiness in us. Let us not think to be free from sin by the strength of Nature, or by the power of our own free-will in our natural condition; which in such a case is not free, but miserably intrall'd and bound up, as we have already shewn; but let us acknowledg Christ alone in it, who is the alone bestower of it. All our liberty without him, is captivity, and worse than Egyptian bondage it self. It is the Son that must make us free, that we may be free indeed, free from the condemning power of sin, and free from the commanding; as it is here in this Text before us, which I have now dispatcht; The law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

SERMON III.

ROMANS 8. 3.

For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.

The Apostle having before shewn that believers are freed both from the guilt and power of sin, he goes about to prove these both distinctly: The former in this third and fourth Verse; the latter in the fifth, and so forward. We are to begin with the first in the third, &c.

NOW in this Verse we have two General Parts observable of us: First, A Defect *implied*. And secondly, A Defect *supplied*. The Defect *implied* in these words, *What the Law could not do in that it was weak*. The Defect *supplied* in these, *God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, &c.*

We begin in order with the first, *viz.* The Defect *implied*; *What the Law could not do in that it was, &c.* Wherein again we have two particulars more, First, The Defect *it self*. And Secondly, The occasion of the Defect. The Defect *it self*, *The Law could not do*. The occasion of it, *In that it was weak through the flesh*.

First, To speak of the Defect *it self*; *Τὸ ἀδυνατεῖν τῆ νόμου*, *What the Law could not do*. What could not the Law do? Why, it could not justify us, or free us from sin and condemnation. It could not make us perfectly holy and righteous in the sight of God. This the Law could not do; and this the Apostle Paul in this Scripture does exhibit to us as the point to be observed, the impotency and defect of the Moral Law in this business of the Justification of a sinner. This is likewise held forth to us in divers other places besides. Thus *Acts* 13. 38, 39, *Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses*. So *Gal.* 3. 21, *If there had been a Law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by*
faith

faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. So again, Heb. 7. 18, *For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.* From all these places we see how insufficient the Law is in this particular.

Now this imperfection and insufficiency which is in it, will further appear unto us in these regards: First, Because the Law does not offer to us any pardon or forgiveness of those things which are done against the Law: The Law it hath in it an *accusing* power, but it hath not in it an *absolving* power; it threatens the *curse*, but it does not tender the *promise*. It is the ministration of *condemnation*, but it is not the ministration of *life*. And accordingly we meet with divers expressions in Scripture to that effect: as Gal. 3. 10, *Curst is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them. He that fails in one point, he is guilty of all,* Jam. 2. 10. And it is called a *killing-letter*, and the like, in 2 Cor. 3. 6, &c. On the other side, the Gospel it is said to be the Ministration of *Glory*, and such as brings life with it.

Secondly, The Law, as it does not tender forgiveness, so neither does it give faith whereby to apprehend and lay hold upon forgiveness which is tendered. This is another thing which is requisite to Justification, not only to offer a *pardon*, but likewise to give an *application* of the pardon which is offer'd to the offender, without which the pardon it self is void and of none effect. Now this the Law doth not do, but only the Gospel; the Law does neither reveal Faith to us, nor work it in us.

Thirdly, The Law does not give us any *power* neither, whereby to keep the Commandments of God, and to perform those things which he requireth of us, but leaves us in this point altogether feeble and unable; No, this is rather the work and business of the Gospel, as the Apostle plainly shews unto us in Gal. 3. 2, where he expostulates with them to this purpose: *Received ye the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* Which *interrogation* is to be resolved into the *negation*; Did ye receive it? No, ye did not. The Law, it hath this in it, that it shews us what is our duty, but it does not at all enable us to the performance of it; it teaches us what is to be done, but it does not give us strength to do it; it lays an injunction upon us, it does not afford any power unto us. And so from all these Considerations together, we see how it is unable to justify us, which is the point here now commended unto us.

This (for the use of it), as it shews us the error and false doctrine of the Papists, who teach justification by the Law, and the works of it; so it also condemns the conceit and imagination of many others beside, who expect it, and look for it in such a way as this is. There are many, if you examine them, and ask them how they hope to be saved? They will answer, By their own good doings; they perform such and such duties, and they abstain from such and such sins, and therefore they must needs go to Heaven by all means; not considering their own weakness and imperfection in all these. This was the conceit of the Pharisee, Luk. 18. 11, 12, *He stood and prayed thus with himself; God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess, &c.* This was also the conceit of the young man in Mat. 19. 20, who said, he had kept all the Commandments from his youth upward; and yet Christ told him, that

that for all that *he still lacked one thing*: The same may be likewise said to all such persons which are of the same mind and opinion, as expecting to be justified by the good works and duties which come from them.

For the further convincing of such kind of people as those are: There are *three* things which may here pertinently be considered by them:

First, That the best works of any which live here in this world, they are imperfect, and come short of the Rule; and so are so far from justifying, as that they need a great deal of pardon and forbearance themselves. Thus the Church and people of God themselves have sometimes acknowledged of themselves, *Isa. 64. 6. We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, &c.* Mark, *our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*, to wit, in regard of the defilements mingled with them.

Secondly, All our good works they are finite, and so cannot make amends for sin, whereby an infinite Justice is wronged, and an infinite Majesty is offended: Betwixt finite and infinite no proportion at all.

Thirdly, Let us do all we can, it is no more than we are bound unto however. Now the doing of our duty for time to come, it does not make amends for our neglect of it for time past. From all these laid together, we see still the truth of the present point in hand; to wit, the impotency and weakness of the Law, as to Justification. In which regard we may every one cry out with the Prophet David, *Psal. 143. 2. Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified*; that is, by any thing of our own, which is to say, *by the Law*.

Why, but if the Law be not able to justify us, *Wherefore then serveth the Law*? as the Apostle makes the expostulation, *Gal. 3. 19.* To this we answer as the Apostle there answers himself, that it serves in regard of transgressions, and so is useful to these following purposes; First, As a Looking-glass, wherein to see our own ugliness and deformity. The Law it shews us those spots, and blemishes, and defects, which are in us, which otherwise we should not so well espy. When we reflect upon our own lives and ways, and then compare them with the Law of God, then we see how short they are, and how far from true perfection. Secondly, It serves as a School-Master to lead us, and drive us to Christ; while it discovers to us our own imperfection, it carries us to seek for perfection in another, that is, in *Him*. As the stings of the fiery Serpents drive the *Israelites* to look up to the Brazen Serpent; so the stings of the Law they drive us to look up to Christ; and as the needle makes way for the thread, so does the Law make way for the Gospel. Thirdly, It serves as a Rule of life and new obedience, vvhich we are to conform our selves unto: We do not vvith the *Antinomians* absolutely make void the Law, no not to the children of God themselves: We do acknowledge and teach, that it has no power in two particulars, and that's all: First, For the business in hand, it has no power to justify a sinner. Secondly, As for another consideration, it has no power to condemn a righteous person; both the absolving and condemning power, either of them are denied unto it: but yet the *commanding-power* is still in force. The Law it is of force to order us, and regulate us, and direct us, and to keep us within compass.

This

Thus it is of use unto us. And thus the Scripture makes it still to be in sundry places of it; as for instance, Psal. 119. 7, 8, *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightning the eyes.* And often in Psal. 119, David shews the great use of the Law to such a purpose as this is, namely, to the ordering of mens ways. Hereby in attending hereunto, he professes that he was made wiser than his Teachers, and than the Ancients, &c. Thus we see how that the Law of God is not altogether useles, only it is incapable of justifying. And that's the first particular, to wit, The Defect it self, what the Law was not able to do: *non admodum tū stius, impossibile legis.*

The second is the occasion of this defect, whence the Law was thus unable: And that is here exprest to be, *by the flesh, ad rē carnis. lex infirmata per Carnem.* The Law therefore cannot justify us, because of our Corruption disabling of us to keep the Law. And here the point to be observed by us, is this, That no man here in this present life is able fully and perfectly to observe the Law of God. This is the meaning of the Apostle, when he says, *The Law is weak through the flesh;* that is indeed, *we for our parts* are weak as to the keeping of the Law. The Law it self is strong, and good enough, and holds still in its full force that ever it did: But we through the infirmity of the flesh and sin which is in us, are unable to keep it. If we could have absolutely fulfilled the Law, we might have expected Justification by it; and the Law so far forth would have been strong: But now through our corruption we cannot, and so the Law by this means is weak. This may be cleared unto us both by Scripture and Experience: First, Take the testimonies of Scripture, which are various to this effect: Thus 2 Chron. 6. 36, *There is no man that sinneth not.* James 3. 2, *In many things we offend all.* 1 Job. 1. 8, *If we say, that we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and there is no truth in us.*

Again secondly, As for Experience: There was never any in the world, though never so holy, which could ever reach hereunto. Those which have done the most and the best, have yet come short of this fulfilling. The Virgin Mary her self, whom the Papists do so much extol as void of sin, yet she did not prove to be so, for we know how she was reproved and rebuked sometimes by Christ, which she had not been, if she had not offended. David a man after Gods own heart, we know how he acknowledged his failings: And Paul who was rapt up into the Third Heaven, we have him also confessing his weaknesses, *That when he would do good, evil was present with him.* These and many more besides (which I need not to stand to reckon up) do shew the weakness of the Law through the flesh, *de facto*, and upon plain experience; It was a thing never yet done, that any one which was a mee man did fulfil the Law. And this (to give you some account of it) may be thus demonstrated to us, as coming thus to pass.

First, From the imbred Concupiscence which all men are infected withall: Those which have in them a principle which does continually oppose and fight against the Law, they are not able to fulfil the Law. Now this have all men in this world, even the best that are; Therefore they are not able to fulfil it. Indeed it is true, for the regenerate this is to be acknowledged of them, That this principle it is very much bat-

batter'd and mortified, and in a great measure subdued in them; but yet it is not wholly removed, or taken away; but it is still in part remaining in them, and that even with some strength and opposition; thus the Apostle Paul does expressly declare it to us, in *Gal. 5. 17. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* And this he does also in another place confirm by his own example. Surely if any one were free from this root of concupiscence, it should be himself; but how was it with him? why, he tells us in *Rom. 8. 23, I find (says he) a Law in my members rebelling against the Law of my mind, and leading me into captivity unto the Law of sin which is in my members. Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from, &c.* Now that which the Apostle did so much complain of in himself, it is no more than what every good Christian besides finds in his own Soul, namely, this sin dwelling in him, and that in every faculty and part of him; Ignorance in the Understanding, Perverseness in the Will, and Disorder in the Affections; All which do make against this perfect fulfilling of the Law. The more of the Law of Sin, the less of the Law of God. And that's the first account.

The second may be taken from that Actual sin which flows from Original: As there is in us a corrupt Nature, which does indispose us to the keeping of the Law; so there are also in us many daily transgressions which do plainly take us off from keeping of it, as contrary to it; yea there are many unavoidable miscarriages as those sins which we call of daily incurion; all which are directly opposite to the perfect and complete observation of Gods Law: And so serve to give us a good account of this present Truth.

Thirdly, It may be also demonstrated from the weakness and imperfection of Grace. No man does any further fulfil the Law, than he has grace given him for the fulfilling of it; than he has grace answerable, and proportionable, and agreeable to the Law it self. For this is a sure and known rule, That, *Actus non excedit vires sui Principii*, the Act cannot go beyond the strength of its own Principle. Nothing (as we say) can go beyond the sphere of its proper activity; *An evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit*: Now no man had ever such grace in this life bestowed upon him; therefore can no man here fulfil the Law.

Indeed, we do not deny, but that God is able to give such a measure of grace as this is: that so (by the way) vve may understand vvhath vve mean vvhether vve say, That it is impossible to fulfil the Law; We do not mean it *de possibilitate absoluta* but *hypothetica*: The question is not, What God can do by his infinite Power; but, What he does in his ordinary Dispensation: He is able to give such grace as vvhetherby vve might fulfil the Law, even here in this World; but he does not, nor has not so decreed in his own Purpose. *The Law is weak through the flesh*; that is, Thirdly, From the imperfection of Grace vvhithin Believers.

Fourthly, It may be likewise shew'd from the nature of the Law it self, and that is, that it is Spiritual. If the fulfilling of the Law vvent no further than the outward Letter, *Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit Adultery. Thou shalt not steal*, and the like, as the young man in the Gospel understood it here: Now perhaps it vvere possible in some

some manner (as he did) to fulfil it. But now we must know, that the Law it does require somewhat more than all this; not only the *outward action*, but also the *inward affection*; and not only some *imperfect endeavour*, but also the *perfectest degree* of obedience which can be performed.

Lastly, It is from hence clear, That none can here in this present life fulfil the Law, from that necessity which lies upon every one to pray for the forgiveness of sins. Sin, it is a transgression of the Law, as the Apostle St. John describes it to be; now there is no man but hath need to beg the pardon and forgiveness of that, as even the Apostles themselves with others are taught in the Lords Prayer; and therefore is it clear, that none can absolutely fulfil the Law. And thus have we an account of the point.

The Use of this point, is first of all for confutation of *Papists*, who teach, that the Law may be fulfilled in this life. But for this it is objected by them, That if the Law be impossible to be kept, then God would command impossibilities, which is a very cruel and unjust act, and such as carries a great deal of Tyranny in it.

To this we answer: First, That the Law of God, when it was at first given, it was then possible to be observed. God gave *Adam* power to keep that Law which he imposed upon him: And the Law of God is eternal, and still the same that ever it was, which is not to be changed from any defect in us. An impossibility of fulfilling the Law may be conceived as two-fold; Either as antecedent to the obligation, or as consequent: To an impossibility in the first sense no man is tyed; to an impossibility in the second he may be.

Again secondly, This present impotency it is contracted by our own default, and so does neither restrain the Law-giver, nor absolve our selves. The Law is *weak through the flesh*, as the Text here expresses it. Our inability which we have voluntarily brought upon our selves, does not hinder God from exacting that which is his own.

The second Use of this point may be, from hence deeply to humble us in the sight of our own insufficiency and misery, which is upon us; Especially when we shall consider that we have brought it upon our selves. All evils are at any time so much the more tedious, as we our selves have any hand in procuring them, and bringing them about. Now thus is it here with us as concerning this present evil of our inability to fulfil the Law. It is an evil which we may thank our selves for, and our own corruptions. The Law was good enough of it self, but it became weak through *our flesh*. We have made the Commandment to be to death, which was ordained unto life, as the Apostle speaks, *Rom. 7. 10.* And so much for the first General, to wit, The Defect implied, *What the Law could not do.*

The second is the Defect supplied; *God sending forth his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, &c.* This we will now enter upon, though we shall not be able fully to dispatch it at this present time: Wee'l go as far as we can. There are three main particulars here observable of us: First, The Author of our Deliverance; And that is God. Secondly, The Means of our Deliverance; And that is Christ. Thirdly, The Ef-

fest of our Deliverance; And that is the condemnation of sin: *God sending forth his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin, &c.*

We begin with the First, The Author or principal Efficient; And that is here signified to be *God*. And when we speak of this, there are three things here further considerable: First, The Goodness of God. And secondly, The Wisdom of God. And thirdly, The Power of God. All these in this Dispensation.

First, Here was the exceeding Goodness and Mercy of God, That when he saw and observed into what a condition we had brought our selves, did not now leave us in this condition, but sought out, and found out a way for the delivery of us. Here were exceeding bowels and love: It was sufficient and enough for God, if he had been pleased so to think it, that he had made us holy and happy at first, and put us into such an estate as we might have continued in, if we had pleased our selves: but now to make us again, after we had un-made and destroyed our selves, This was the exceeding riches of Mercy which is here to be taken notice of by us.

And this it may be further amplified, and illustrated, and set home upon us from divers Considerations.

First, From the *state* in which we stood to Himself; and that is of *enmity* and *hatred*; *When we were enemies, we were reconciled unto God by the death of his Son*, Rom. 8. 10. To deliver us as meerly miserable, that had not been so much; but as Adversaries and Opposites to Himself, this was more!

Secondly, From the *state* in which *He* stood to us: The party offended, to the parties offending: It was God that was first wronged, and yet it was God that first began to think of the means of Reconciliation, *Found of them that sought him not, &c.*

Thirdly, His Independency upon us: He stood in no need of us; He could have done well enough without us. There was a great matter also in that. Those which are first wronged, yet they may have need of those which have wrong'd them. God had not so of us.

Fourthly, His Præterition, and passing by of other Creatures who by their Creation were more glorious than our selves; The Angels which fell, unrestored; no thoughts of delivering of them. Man does but fall, and presently thoughts of his deliverance. Mercies are so much the greater, as they are more appropriate and peculiar to our selves above others.

What does all this serve for, but to enlarge our hearts more in thankfulness to God, who has done so graciously for us, and with us: And to study how to serve him, as *he* has studied how to save us. And that's the first thing in this Dispensation, to wit, The goodness of God; God in his Goodness.

The second is, The *Wisdom* of God; God in his Wisdom. And that especially in observing this order and method. First, He would let us fall away from him before he would put us into an estate of impossibility of falling. First, He would suffer us to be miserable, before he would make us absolutely and eternally happy. The Law must first be weak through the flesh, before God sends his Son.

This

This Wisdom of God was here seen in these respects: First, In that hereby was declared our own perverseness and rebellion, for the humbling of us, that we may see what strange Creatures we were when we were left to our selves; and that whiles we appear to be the cause of our own ruine, we might from hence so much the more magnifie the goodness of God towards us in our deliverance.

Secondly, To shew the Power of God, which follows in the next particular; To raise out of a desperate condition, it carries in it a great deal of more ability, than to preserve in a good condition.

Thirdly, That mans happiness and salvation might now be more sure and firm unto him: Health after precedent sickness, it is usually the firmest health. A bone which is broken, and set again, it is so much the stronger. And Friendship after falling out, more intense and affectionate.

Let us therefore herein applaud and admire Gods Wisdom in these things.

Thirdly, Here was also his Power. And whiles here in this Text our salvation is reduced to God as the principal Author and Efficient of it, it is hereby made to be strong salvation; especially if we consider in what a case we were before he undertook it. We see here that there is nothing can stand in the way betwixt us and eternal Happiness it self. If there were any thing at all which could hinder, it should be our deep engagement in sin, it should be the *weakness of the Law, through the flesh*; but this we see does not. Though the Law were unable to save us, yet God for all that is not unable. Hence it is that the Scripture still represents our salvation to us under this notion. *I am the Lord, thy God, and thy Saviour*, Isa. 43. 3, 12, &c. *The mighty God*, &c. Isa. 9. 6. When the Disciples said, It was impossible for any to be saved, if rich men did not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, *Who then can be saved?* What said Christ unto them? *With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible*, Mat. 19. 26, &c.

The ground hereof is taken from the Infiniteness and Unlimitedness of his Power. That Power which is Infinite, it can meet with no difficulty which will overcome it: *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?* Gen. 18. 14. No, not any thing at all; and so not this amongst the rest.

The consideration of this point is very comfortable to the people of God in all their spiritual distresses; As concerning the infallibility and certainty of their salvation. It is such as cannot be frustrated, or put by, or disappointed; because it is God that does undertake it, who is infinite and unlimited in Power. If it were in any hands besides His, we might justly fear the miscarriage of it.

And so as for staying of the Conscience in case of doubting, and trouble of spirit, for great sins, and for many sins, &c. Consider here it is God that saves; who can pardon, and forgive, and conquer, and subdue, and remove the greatest that are. *Who is a God like unto thee*, &c. Mic. 7. 18.

So likewise further: As it holds for spiritual salvation, so it may be carried and applied to temporal. The same God that found out a way for the redeeming of his Church from eternal destruction, which seemed to be unavoidable to it; The same God can also find out a way for the

the redemption of it from *temporal* destruction, which is at any time near unto it; as we see he has done in many instances in Scripture, as in delivering his people from *Egypt*, *Exod. 14. 14*, *Stand still, and ye shall see the salvation of the Lord, &c.* And so in delivering them from *Babylon*, *Zec. 8. 6*, *Though it be impossible in your eyes, should it be in mine, saith the Lord? &c.*

Therefore we should comfort our selves with such thoughts as these are; and especially now in these sad times which are upon us, &c.

And so now I have done with the first particular, *viz.* The Author and Efficient of our Deliverance, and that is God; *God sending, &c.* Now there follows next the Means, which is Christ, *His own Son, &c.*

SERMON

SERMON IV.

ROMANS 8. 3.

For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.

It is the Excellency and Commendation of Artists, to shew their skill where Bunglers fail, and to supply and make up a defect or miscarriage in others performances. This is that which is observable and remarkable in God Himself, who where he sees and takes notice of the weakness and insufficiency which is in us, does delight there to express and to put forth his own Power and Skillfulness. It is that which He does here in this Scripture, which we have still before us, as concerning the impotency of the Law (meeting with our Corruption) in the point of Justification; When that appeared to be weak and unable to present us as righteous in the sight of God; to acquit us, and to free us from Condemnation; God found out a way to help it, and to cure this Defect in it, by sending of his own Son into the world for your Redemption. This is the scope and drift of this Text, which we have here now in hand, at this time with Gods Assistance to be finished by us. I have already observed in it two General Parts: First, A Defect implied. And Secondly, A Defect supplied. The Defect implied, that we have in these words, What the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh. The Defect supplied, that we have in these words, God sending his own Son, &c. Wherein again three Branches more: First, The Author of our Deliverance, and that is God. Secondly, The Means of our Deliverance, and that is the sending of Christ. Thirdly, The Effect of it, and that is the Condemnation of Sin, &c. Having spoken of the former, it remains now we come to the following.

THE second particular Branch considerable in the second General of the Text is the *Means* of Deliverance; and that is here express to

be the *sending of Christ*, in these words, *God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin*. In vvhich passage vve have three things more considerable of us: First, *The Person sent*, and that is the *Son of God*, Gods own Son. Secondly, *The manner of sending him*, and that is *in the likeness of sinful flesh*. Thirdly, *The End* for vvhich, and that is *for sin*.

We begin with the *First* of these, *viz.* *The Person sent*, Gods own Son: Where before we come to treat of the *main and principal point* which is here intended in the Text; We may take notice of sundry profitable Truths which do here lye in our way as *pertinent and preparatory* hereunto; And there are no less than *three* main Articles of our *Christian Faith*, all at once, which are here exhibited unto us. First, Here's the *Godhead and Divinity of Christ*. Secondly, Here's the *Manhood and Incarnation of Christ*. And thirdly, Here's the *Union of the Two Natures of Christ in one Person*.

First, Here's Christs *Divinity and Godhead*. He, who is the *Mediator of the Church*, is said to be also *the Son of God*; and whiles he is said to be Gods own Son, he is hereby signified and declared to be no other than *God himself*. Now Christ is here call'd the *Son of God*, not by *Creation*, as the *Angels*; Job 1. 6. Nor by *Adoption and Grace*, as all *Believers*, Joh. 1. 12. But by *Nature and Eternal Generation*, in the *incomprehensible communication* of the whole *Divine Essence* unto him. Thus is Christ the *Son of God*; and being so, is *very God indeed*. Look as in *common Nature*, the *substance* which the *father* is of, the *very same* is communicated to the *son*, *father* and *son* they are *both of one* and the *same substance*; even so also is it here in *this*.

For the better illustrating of this present point unto us, there are two things here considerable. First, *That* it is so, for the Truth of the *thing*. Secondly, *Why* it was requisite to be so, for the *equity and fitness* of the *Oeconomie and Dispensation*.

First, We shall see that it is so, That *Christ Jesus is very God*. And it may be cleared from these following Considerations: First, Because he has the *Name of God* in Scripture put upon him; and that not only as *Angels and Magistrates*, which are so *representatively*; but as partaking of the *Divine Nature and Essence*. Thus Job. 1. 1, *The Word was God*. Phil. 1. 6, *Who being in the form of God thought it no robbery to be equal with God*. Rom. 9. 5, *God blessed for ever*. And Col. 2. 9, *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the God bodily*, &c.

Secondly, *Christ* hence appears to be *God*, Because he has the *Properties of God* ascribed unto him; His *Eternity*, Joh. 8. 58, *Eesore Abraham was, I am*. His *Omnipresence*: *Lo I am with you alway unto the end of the world*, Mat. 28. ult. His *Omnipotency*: Phil. 3. 21, *He is able to subdue all things to himself*.

Thirdly, He hath the *Works of God* attributed to him likewise; Of *Creation*, and *Providence*, and *Sanctification*. *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*, says he, Job. 5. 17. *The world was made by him*, Joh. 1. 3. *He sustaineth all things by his word*, Heb. 1. 3, &c.

Lastly, The same *Honour* is given to *Christ*, as to *God*. Of *Adoration*: Heb. 1. 6; *Let all the Angels of God worship him*. Of *Invocation*, 1 Cor. 1. 2, *That call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ*. Of *Faith*: Ye believe

believe in God, believe also in me, Joh. 14. 1. And thus we see the point, that it is so. For the thing it self.

Secondly, We may consider *why* it was so for the Equity of the Dispensation. And here it was very requisite that he who was the Redeemer of the Church, should be very God in these respects.

First, That he might *endure the punishment* due to our sins, without sinking under it; which no *meer man*, nor any other *Creature* besides, could have been able to *have done*. There's none could have sustained the *wrath of God*, without the *strength and power of God*.

Secondly, That he might give value and efficacy to his Sufferings; which being not infinite in regard of time and duration, it was requisite should at least be infinite in regard of the *Dignity of the Person*. For God to suffer, was more than for *all the world* to do it besides.

Thirdly, That he might the better make known to us the *will of God*; which none but *true God* was able to do neither. Thus *Joh. 1. 18*, No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. So *Mat. 11. 27*, No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. The things of God knoweth none but God himself, *1 Cor. 2. 11*.

Lastly, That he might give the *Holy Ghost*, and bestow his Spirit upon the Church in all the gifts and graces of it, which is proper *only to God himself* to do, &c.

The Use which we are to make of this point is, First of all, From hence to strengthen and confirm our faith in the belief of this Doctrine against *Arrians*, and such as those who do labour to oppose it, and who *deny the truth of it*. As *Satan* makes it his work to *overthrow* it, so we should make it our work to *establish* it; and that so much the rather, for his endeavours and attempts against it. If we deny our Saviour to be God, what will become of us?

This is matter of exceeding comfort and consolation to us, In the *fulnes* of our *salvation*, and in the *certainty* of it; Seeing he that undertakes to save us is no other than God, therefore there is nothing can hinder it, or come between it, whiles we are such as do belong to Him; seeing he is the *Mighty God*, as the Prophet *Esay* calls him, therefore *he is mighty to save*, as he also says of him; Therefore *he is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him*, as the Apostle also tells us in *Heb. 5. 25*, &c. Seeing we are redeemed by the blood of God, as it is *Act. 20. 28*, therefore our *Redemption* must needs be *complete* and *perfect Redemption*, and such as will *hold good* for us. If it had been by *Men* only, or by *Angels*, it might have miscarried, and been suspected, whereas now there is no ground at all to *fear* it, or to *call it into Question*.

Thirdly, We should hence *honour the Son, as we honour the Father, Job. 5. 23*. We should fear him, and trust in him, and pray to him, and depend upon him, and give all respect and reverence to him, which is due even to God Himself; Seeing he is indeed God, we should accordingly carry our selves towards Him, as to Him that is God indeed; The Great God and our Saviour. And that's the first Mystery and Article of our Christian Faith, which is here exhibited to us, *viz. The Godhead and Divinity of Christ*.
The

The Second is the *Manhood* and Incarnation of Christ; *God manifest in the flesh*; the *Son of God* becoming *man*, and taking our nature upon him. This is signified in these words, *In the likeness of sinful flesh*, *Et in similitudine carnis peccati*; this must be rightly understood and distinguished by us: For at the first hearing of it, it may seem to make for the Heresie of the *Marcionites*, those ancient Hereticks, which held that the Body of Christ was not a true Body, but only an *Imaginary*; That he took not our *Flesh* upon him in deed, but only in *shew* and in resemblance, and in appearance, the *likeness* of our flesh. But for this, the answer is clear, That this word *likeness* here in the text, it is not to be referred to *flesh*, but it is to be referred to *sinful*. It was true flesh, but it was but like to *sinful flesh*; *Vera caro, sed similis carni peccati: vera caro, sed non peccati caro*, as St. *Austin* expresses it: It was true flesh, but it was but like the flesh of sin; true flesh, but not *sinful flesh*. Christ he was in all things like unto us, *sin* only excepted, as it is said of him, *Heb. 4. 15.* All others, they come into the world absolutely *sinful flesh*, but Christ only in the *likeness* of such flesh. But as for the nature of flesh, so it was the same with ours; and he took our whole nature upon him, a true body, and a reasonable soul, yet without corruption: As he was true God, so he was likewise true man. And this is the Doctrine of the Scripture, not only here in this Text, but in divers other places besides; as *Job. 1. 14.* The word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us. *Gal. 4. 4.* God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, &c. *Phil. 2. 7.* He took upon him the form of a servant, and was found in fashion as a Man, &c.

This was requisite thus to be for two Reasons especially: First, That he might be a person capable of suffering and dying. He that should expiate our sins, he must do it by suffering and death: Now the Godhead was incapable of this, and therefore it was necessary that he who was our Saviour should be Man.

Secondly, That satisfaction might be made to God in the same Nature that had offended; It was man that had sinned, and therefore it was man also that must make satisfaction for sin, *Heb. 2. 14, 15.* Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil, &c.

This Doctrine of the Incarnation of Christ; It is a Doctrine of special use and improvement to us; which should accordingly teach us to strengthen our Faith in it, and be much in meditation of it.

First, It is matter of comfort and encouragement to us, That now we may come to God boldly and confidently in the Name of Christ. Take God as he is in his own Nature, and there's no coming near Him; But now as he is in ours, hence there's liberty of access unto him; we may come freely to the Throne of Grace; He is Bone of our Bone, and Flesh of our Flesh; our Brother, our Kinsman, of near relation to us. It is a very sweet and comfortable point in the due reflection upon it. And so we should improve it; we should not only slightly and customarily make mention of such points as these are; But we should draw out the sweetness of them, and live as it were upon them; we should spiritually feast upon such a precious dainty as this is, which is here communicated to us in this great Mystery.

This

This is the wisdom of a Christian, to take all occasions that may be, whereby to represent God acceptable, amiable, and lovely to himself, and so as he may be encouraged to approach and draw near to God. And this is *one* amongst the rest, by looking upon Him in *our Nature*, and being *manifest in our flesh*. It is very satisfactory in *trouble of Conscience*, and in the sense of Gods *wrath for sin*. These two great Points taken together, how much marrow and sweetness have they in them! The *Divinity* of Christ on *one* hand, and the *Humanity* of Christ on *another*: He is *God*, and therefore he is *able* to save us; And he is *Man*, and therefore he is *willing* to save us; And what can we desire more?

In times of peace, and freedom, and tranquility, when Conscience lies still, and is not awakened, men are apt to *despise Religion*, and the comfortable Truths of it, and so this Truth of Gods Incarnation amongst the rest. But in trouble and perplexity of Conscience, in sickness and death, and the like; then these points will be of great use and benefit to us; And we should treasure them up for our selves against such times as these are. When Satan shall labour to present God as *terrible* to us, and our own misgiving Consciences shall be ready to close also with Satan in this particular; then to fly to this Refuge and strong Consolation which is set before us, this Anchor of the Soul, which is sure and steadfast. That God is now well-pleased with *our Nature*, forasmuch as it is the *Nature* of his *own Son*; And being reconciled to *our Nature*, will be so much the easier reconciled to *our Persons*; whiles by Faith we shall apply our selves to him. This is very comfortable against all the sad apprehensions of God against us. And as it is comfortable in the thing it self, Christs *taking of our Nature upon him*; so it is very comfortable also in the consideration of the *way* in which it was done, in the *Conception of a Virgin*. The *miraculousness* of the carriage of it, is an additional to the thing it self; and serves very much to strengthen and to confirm the *Faith of the Church*, and that in all the dangers and troubles and difficulties which are at any time incident to it. That Christ is *born*, and that he is *born thus*; take them *both* together, and there's much encouragement and satisfaction of mind which is contained in them. And so we shall find the Scripture it self to improve this business to us; as in *Isa. 9. 1, &c.* where there is signified to be *great joy* in the midst of *great affliction*; occasionally from the *Birth of Christ*. In the last verse of the foregoing Chapter, it is said, *They shall look unto the earth, and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they should be driven to darkness*. And he tells in the next Chapter, of a distress greater than formerly; and yet withal he presently makes mention of *great joy*, *They shall joy before thee, as in the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil, Isa. 9. 4.* How do these two agree? Great and unheard-of Affliction, and yet great and extraordinary Rejoicing. Why, we have an account of this given in *v. 6* of the same Chapter; *For unto us a child is born, and unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder*. All which is spoken concerning Christs coming in the Flesh; the news and tydings whereof, was so comfortable to the people of God, as that it did very much qualifie them, and satisfy them in their greatest trouble, and turn their mourning it self into joy.

And so likewise (I say moreover) as to the *way* and *means* of accomplishment; There was a great matter in that also; And so again the Scripture *improves* it, as we may see in *Isa. 7. 14.* When the people of God were there *in distress*, and knew not what should become of them, but were afraid of being destroyed and extinguished; God gives them this sign of their deliverance, even the Birth of Christ, and the *miraculous transaction* of it; *The Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his Name Immanuel.* What was this now to the purpose, as to their present deliverance, the Birth of Christ, which was to be accomplished so many years after? Yes, it held very pertinently; and that in two particulars, which were very suitable and proper hereunto; It held as to the *Goodness* of God, and it held as to the *Power* of God: Both of which were to have a special Influence upon their Recovery and Preservation.

First, As to the *Goodness* of God: That they might not doubt of *that*, but might have their Faith strengthened and confirmed in this particular. This was *one thing* which the people of God were apt to question now at this time, Whether or no God had mercy enough for them in the case in which they were; And whether he had not *forgotten to be gracious*, as the *Psalmist* expresses it; What, Has he any goodness in him for such poor Creatures and Wretches as we are. Yes, for He will *send you Christ*; He will give you *his Son* as a Token of his Good-will towards you. He that will give you the *greater*, he will not stick to give you the *less*: He that takes care of your *Eternal* salvation, he will not neglect your *Temporal*, so far forth as is needful for you: He that's with you in your *Nature*, *Emmanuel, God with us*, he will not stick to be with you in your Condition. *He that spared not his own Son, he will with him give you all things.* Thus as to Gods Goodness.

Secondly, As to the *Power* of God: It holds likewise as to *that*. For that was another *scruple* which the people of God had now upon them, That their Disease was past recovery, That their Wound was incurable, That their Affliction was so great, as that it was in a manner impossible to remove it. Why now for satisfying of *this also*, here is signified, That a *Virgin shall conceive*; That God that can conquer the *difficulties of Nature*, he can conquer the *difficulties of Providence*; And he that can bring forth a Son out of the Womb of a Virgin, He can likewise bring forth safety, and deliverance, and preservation out of the Bowels, and out of the midst of Destruction and Ruin it self. Here's the force of the Argument, and the Improvement of this Mystery of Faith to the Consolation of the Church.

Again, Secondly, As we may make use of this point in a way of Comfort and Consolation, so also especially in a way of Thankfulness and Acknowledgment. Christs taking of our Nature upon him, and Gods *giving* him and *sending* him to this purpose; it does also call for this from us; We should admire his *great Love and Goodness* in this particular; and labour to have our hearts much inflamed and ravished with the consideration of it. Oh Beloved, What shall we thank God for, if we do not thank him for *Christ*? As this is the great expression of his Goodness; so it should likewise be the *great Argument* of our Thankfulness.

fulness. And we should labour to be exceedingly enlarged and drawn out to this purpose; As great Mercies do still call for great Acknowledgments and Celebrations from us. That's a second Improvement.

Thirdly, This point should have influence upon us in a way of Imitation and Conformity to Christ; And that in two particulars: First, As to general Purity and Holiness of Life and Conversation. And secondly, As to special Humility, and Condescension, and lowliness of Mind.

First, As to general Purity and Holiness of life. Christ *took our Nature upon him*, and wore it without any defilement or pollution at all of it. It was not *sinful*, but only the *likeness of sinful flesh* in him. And so in a *manner* we should endeavour that it may be in us. I say, that it may be in a *manner* so with us; Indeed it cannot be expected, that it should be so *absolutely*. As long as we live here in the world, and *carry flesh about us*; so long it will be in *some degree*, *sinful flesh* in us. But we should labour and endeavour with our selves, That it may be as little as may be. That though we *walk in the flesh*, yet we may not *walk after the flesh*; And that though it *abide in us*, yet it may not *rule over us*, nor have *full power and dominion upon us*; *Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof*, as it is *Rom. 6. 12*. We should not be *debtors to the flesh, to live after the flesh*, *Rom. 8. 12*. This as to *general Purity and Holiness of life*.

Secondly, As to *special Humility*, and condescension and lowliness of Mind. This Doctrine of the *Incarnation of Christ*, it is improvable to *this purpose* likewise; and so the Scripture again teaches us to improve it. *Phil. 2. 3, &c. Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves. Let the same mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, &c. made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, humbled himself to the death of the Cross, &c.* This is that which becomes all those who are good Christians and Members of him, in conformity and correspondency to him. The higher they are in *condition*, so much the lower to be in *disposition*. And so I have done also with the second *grand Mystery of Religion*, which is here tendred unto us, *viz. The Manhood and Incarnation of Christ. God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.*

The third and last *Point and Mystery of Religion* is this, namely, The *Union of the two Natures of Christ in one person*. Here's no *confounding* of these Natures one with another, the Godhead and Manhood; but each of them *entire and distinct*, yet making one Person. The *Manhood* not being a *person* of it self, but only a *nature*, and that taken into *unity of person with the Son of God*. In him the *fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily*; that is, dwelt *personally*, in the place *before alledged*. Therefore he is called *Emanuel, God with us, Isa. 7. 14*. Therefore it is said, That *the word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory, as the glory of the only begotten Son of the Father, &c.*

This is a ground of that which we call the *Communication of Properties*, wherein the *particularities of one Nature* are attributed and ascribed to the *whole person*; As when the Church is said to be redeemed with the *Blood of God*; And the *Lord of Glory* is said to be *crucified*; And *Jesuw*

is said to encrease in *wisdom*, &c. which is not so to be understood as if either the Godhead were capable of dying, or blood-shedding, or improvements in knowledge, and the like; but because he who *was* God, *being Man also*, had these properties in him *from his Manhood*.

The consideration of this point, is first of all a matter of Honour and Dignity to us, in that our Nature by this means is advanced above the Nature of *Angels*; which though above it by *Creation*, is inferior to it from this *Hypostatical Union*, being now assumed into the *personality* of the Son of God, the *second Person in Trinity*.

Secondly, It is matter of great *comfort* and *consolation* to us, That from hence now we are sure not to miss of any thing which is *good* or requisite for us. Look, as from the near *union of Persons* in *one Essence*, the *Father* does nothing to us but by the *Son*; so from the near union of *Natures* in *one Person*, the *Godhead* conveys nothing to us but by the *Manhood*. The *Humane nature of Christ*, whereunto we are united by *faith*, it is the *Channel* or *Conduit-pipe* for the conveyance of all grace unto us.

From hence likewise follows the *worth* and *dignity* of whatsoever Christ did or suffered in *our behalf*; Because whatever was done by Christ, it was done by God; and though it was the *Humane Nature* in which he did it, yet it was the *Divine Nature* which gave valor, and vigor, and efficacy to it; It being the action of Him who was both God and Man.

Again, From hence also we see a *ground of fitness* in Christ to be the Mediator of the Church. *There is one God*, says the Apostle, *and one Mediator betwixt God and Man, Jesus Christ*. Here we may take notice of his *suitableness* and *proportionableness* hereunto; Because being God, he is a Friend to God; and being Man, he is a Friend to Man; And so most fit to be an Umpire, and Days-man, and Moderator betwixt them. Thus it is every way useful to us. And so ye have also the Third Mystery and Article of Faith contained in this Scripture, *viz. The Union of two Natures in one person*. All together making Religion and Christianity to be a most sublime and mysterious business; such as no other Art or Profession has the like of it in the world, and which the glorious Angels themselves look into, 2 Pet. 1.12.

Now these things being thus premised unto us, the main and principal Doctrine which the Apostle Paul here in this Text intends as the *scope* and *drift* of it, is thus much, That Jesus Christ, the *Eternal Son of God*, who in due time took upon him our *Humane Nature*, is the *only Means* whereby we are freed and delivered from *eternal destruction*. And this is also consonant to some other places of Scripture besides, as Act. 4. 12. *Neither is there salvation in any other; For there is no other Name under Heaven, whereby we must be saved*. So Rom. 7. 25. *Who shall deliver me, &c. I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord*.

Thus it does exclude all others whatsoever from this work. First, We could not free or deliver *our selves*; because there is *none* who is *bare Man* is void of *sin*; There is *none* who is *bare Man* that can perfectly fulfil the *Law of God*, which it was requisite a *Mediator* should do. Yea, we see it is the very *aim* of the Text *it self*, wholly to shut out us, while it is said, That the *Law* could not do it in that it *was weak through the flesh*.

Nor

Nor, secondly, Could the *Angels* deliver us neither; Because, first, being *finite Creatures* they could not undergo the *wrath* of an *Infinite God*. And then besides, Being of *another Nature* than that which had offended, they could not make a *proper and adequate satisfaction* to the *Justice of God*.

The consideration of this point does so much the more strongly engage us and bind us to Christ. If we could have been saved *another way*, it had been *another matter*. But now seeing there was none, but *this*, at least in appearance to us; this does oblige us so much the more to *him*. And teaches us to take heed of joining any other besides in co-partnership *with him*.

Again, further, It should teach us all we can to be *found in Christ*, our selves. For if there be no salvation but *by him*, there's no salvation but *in him*. And so the Apostle himself apprehended it, who counted all things but dung and dross in comparison of *this*, in *Phil. 3. 8, 9*. We should henceforth take heed that we neglect not so great salvation which is tendred to us by God in his Son, even his *own Son*; the *Son of his Nature*, and the *Son of his Love*, as the Scripture elsewhere represents him. That's the first particular, *viz.* The *Person sent*, the *Son of God*.

The second is the *manner of sending him*, *In the likeness of sinful flesh*. But herein I have *prevented my self*, by handling it in the *former point*, when I spake of the *Incarnation of Christ*. Only there is one thing more which we have not yet spoken unto, and that is, That Christ who was the Mediator of the Church, he was *sent and appointed* to that *performance*. He was *sent*, that is to say, *Oeconomically*, and by way of *Dispensation*. This does not imply the *Son as God* to be inferior to the *Father* (for so he is not), but as *God-man*, set a part and design'd to that office; Thus he is often in Scripture said to be *sent*.

This we may take notice of to this purpose, namely, to shew unto us, how requisite and necessary it is for our selves, in whatever business we undertake, especially of great consequence and concernment, to have our *Call and Mission from God*; That he *send us and appoint us* thereunto; As in the Magistracy, and in the Ministry, and the *like*. How shall they hear without a *Preacher*? And how shall they preach except they be *sent*? *Rom. 10. 14, 15*. And the Lord lays it to the charge of the *false Prophets*, *Jer. 23. 21*, That they *ran* when he *sent them not*, and that they *prophesied*, when as he *spake not unto them*. This *sending of God's* is very requisite and necessary for us upon *sundry grounds*: First, That so we may have his Help and Assistance in it. Whatever business we go about without Gods Appointment, we go about in our own Natural strength, and so cannot promise to our selves any assistance from God in it. But when he calls us, and designs us, and sets us apart, as he did Christ, we may *expect help* from him.

Secondly, In order to Gods *acceptance and approbation*. It will from hence be more *pleasing* to God what we do, and *well taken* by him; As God was *well-pleased* with Christ in his performance of the work of our Redemption, Because he had *called him*, and *sent him* thereunto.

Thirdly, In order likewise to *success*. There is likelihood of *some good*

good to follow upon that performance which is undertaken by designation from God; As Christ upon this account was *actually* the Author of eternal salvation to us, and did purchase salvation for us.

This accordingly teaches us, in all things that at any time we go about, to examine how it is *thus* with us. Those that go without *this*, they go about a *frivolous Errand*: Those that *have* this, they may comfort themselves against all discouragements whatsoever from the world. That's the second thing, the *Manner*; God sent his Son, by way of designation.

The third thing here considerable is the *End*; and that is exprest to be for sin; *ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτίας*. For sin, that is, to be an offering for sin, 2 Cor. 5. 21. That which we may note from it is this, That sin was that which occasioned Jesus Christ to be sent into the world; for which he took our Nature upon him; and in that Nature suffered so much for us as indeed he did. All this, it was for sin. Thus we have it, Gal. 4. 4. God sent his Son to redeem them that are under the Law. So Tit. 2. 14. That he might redeem us from all iniquity, &c. 1 Joh. 4. 10. He sent his Son to be a Propitiation for our sins. This was the great Errand which he was sent on, and for which he came into the world.

Now God had herein a regard to a double Consideration: First, His own glory, as sin was opposite to that. And secondly, Our good, as sin was opposite to *this* likewise.

First, His own glory, as sin was opposite to that. Sin, it was that which was contrary to the pure and holy Nature of God; and therefore he was resolved to remove it, and to take it away; and for this purpose he sent his Son into the world, in order hereunto, as it is 1 Joh. 3. 8, For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil.

Again, secondly, For our good, and our salvation. Sin it was contrary to *this* also. And therefore he sent his Son to remove it, that thereby he might make way for us; that he might take away that which was most destructive to our eternal welfare.

What does all this teach us? First, From hence to take notice of the grievous and fearful nature of sin. Those that make light of it, and count it but a small matter, as sometimes they do, let them here see, what a thing indeed it is: We may see the nature of the Disease by the nature of the Remedy: That which could not be holpen but by the sending of the Son of God into the world, that was certainly no small grievance, nor to be reckoned so by us.

Secondly, Let us not set up that which Christ came to take away; lest we thereby make his coming of no effect unto us: Much less let us take occasion from his coming to give our selves so much the more liberty in sinning, as many people do at such times as these are. And so I have done also with the second Branch of the second General in this Verse, viz. The Means of our deliverance, the sending of Christ, in these words, God sent his own Son, &c. And for sin, &c.

The third and last is the Effect or Accomplishment of it: Christs obtaining of the end for which he came; And Gods obtaining of the end for which he sent him, in these words, He condemned sin in the flesh. There are two things here considerable of us: First, That which Christ did.

did. And secondly, The *state* or *condition* which he did it in. That which he did, was the *Condemnation of sin*. The *state* which he did it in, was *in the flesh*, as it is here express unto us.

First, For the *thing it self* which he did, He *condemned sin*. *Condemn'd* it, What was that? That is, He took away both the *guilt* and the *power* of it. Of *sin*, that is, of *all sin* at large; whether *Original* or *Actual*; the *sin* of our *nature*, or the *sin* of our *lives*: Christ hath taken them away both to *damnation* as also to *dominion*.

First, He hath taken away the *guilt* of it. He hath *condemned sin* in that respect. God hath punished sin in his *own Son*, thus *Isa. 53. 10*, *It pleased the Lord to bruise him, and to put him to grief*: And it is there also signified to be for *our sins*; He *laid upon him the iniquities of us all*. So *1 Pet. 2. 24*, *Who his own self bare our own sins in his own body on the Cross, that we being dead to sin, should live*, &c.

Secondly, He hath taken away the *power* of sin, and *condemn'd* it so likewise. *Rom. 6. 6*, *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead, is freed from sin*, &c. And *v. 11*, *Likewise reckon your selves to be dead indeed unto sin; but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord*. And *v. 14*, *Sin shall not have dominion over you*, &c.

In this *dispensation* of God, for the *condemning* of *sin* by *Christ*, there were divers things at once *remarkable*, and so *considerable* of us:

First, *Gods infinite Justice*; In that he would not let sin go *unpunished*. No, but rather than it should escape, he would punish it in his *own dear Son*; And would *condemn him*, rather than not *condemn it*.

Secondly, *Gods infinite Mercy*; In that he would punish sin in the *Surety*, and not in the proper person himself, that had *offended*: That he would punish the *just* for the *unjust*, as the Scripture sometimes expresses it.

Thirdly, *Gods infinite Wisdom*; In contriving of a way for the uniting and reconciling of these two *Attributes* together, his *Justice* and his *Mercy*; and that in the full expression and demonstration of each: Perfect *Justice* satisfied, and perfect *Mercy* enlarged.

Fourthly, *Gods infinite Power*; In that he could do that which *none other* could do besides. What the *Law* could not do, in that it was *weak through the flesh*; That God could do, and did do by *strength in the flesh*. All these particulars are here *considerable* in this *dispensation*.

The Use of this point to our selves comes to *this*: First, To *comfort* us concerning our own particulars, as many of us as are *true Believers*, and *Members of Christ*. Therefore sin shall not be *condemn'd in us*, because it is already *condemn'd in Christ*. God will not punish the same sin *twice*: It consists not with his *Justice*.

Again, Sin it self, it may not now *condemn us*; for it is *condemn'd it self*. And a *Malefactor* that is *condemn'd*, hath no power of *condemning any other*.

And so as to matter of *dominion* in sin: It is a comfort to be freed from that also; and it is a sweet meditation to those that groan under the burden of their corruptions, to think with themselves, that *sin* is *condemn'd*.

Second-

Secondly, We see what cause we have to make good our interest in Christ, and to see that we are by faith united to him, and made one with him; from whence we may come to partake of these Benefits from him, of freedom both from the plague, as also from the *punishment of sin*; and that though we may be chastised, yet we may not be *condemned*, &c.

Lastly, Let us take heed of *speaking* and *pleading* for sin, which is thus condemned by *God himself*: seeing he has *past sentence* upon it, let us not open our mouths for it. It is *God* that condemns, who is *be then here* that *justifies*? And thus much of the *thing it self* which God did, which was the first thing considerable.

The *second* is the state which he did it in, that is here exprest to be in the *flesh*, *is vi. said*, Christ in the *flesh* (that is in our *humane nature*, which is here so called) *condemning sin*; where we see, that *flesh* and *freedom from sin*, are in themselves *consistent*, and may stand together. It is possible for *flesh* to be free from *sin*. This we gather from this *Conjunction*.

This appears to be so, first, Because it was so once before, namely, in our *first Creation*. *God made man righteous*, Eccles. 7. 29. In our first moulding and framing, *our flesh* had no *defilement* at all upon it.

Secondly, As it was so in the *Creation*, so it will also be hereafter in the *Resurrection*, wherein *sinful flesh* and *blood* shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, as the *Apostle* tells us, 1 Cor. 15. 50; *neither shall corruption inherit incorruption*, as is there *subjoined*.

Thirdly, It is so already in *Christ our Head*, who though he had true *flesh*, yet had not *sinful flesh* in him at all; it was the truth of the *one*, but it was but the *likeness* of the other; as who *took our sins* upon him, but in the mean time had no sinfulness at all of his own inherent in him. From these Considerations it is clear, That *flesh*, and *freedom from sin*, are simply *consistent*.

This should accordingly teach us to labour, that it may be so in some sort, and in some degree in *our selves*, that so we may happily comply with this *gracious undertaking* of *our Saviour* on our behalf.

That's the last branch here considerable, namely, the *Effect* or *Accomplishment* of that *Deliverance* which God by Christ hath wrought for us, and that is the *condemnation of sin in the flesh*.

And so I have done also with the *second General* of the text, viz. the *Defect supplied*; and in that, with the whole text it self. For *what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh*, God sending his own Son in the *likeness of sinful flesh*, and for sin condemned *sin in the flesh*.

SERMON V.

ROMANS 8. 4.

*That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us,
who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.*

There were two things especially which God did aim at and propound to himself in the sending of Christ into the world: The one was the satisfying of his own glorious Attributes, his Justice and Mercy: And the other was the procuring and accomplishing of our Salvation; His own Glory, and our Good: And these two, they do happily concur and meet together in this present Scripture; where it is signified, that God did therefore send his Son to take our Nature upon him, that the righteousness of the Law might hereby be fulfilled in us: That the Law might be fulfilled, there's the providing for his own Honour; And that it might be fulfilled in us, there's the providing for our Good; and each of these jointly considered, are here presented unto us.

IN this Verse the Apostle lays down the end of God's sending his Son in the flesh for the condemnation of sin, and that is, *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.* There are two general parts which are here observable of us: First, The Benefit it self which is conveyed by Christ, and that is, a *fulfilling of the righteousness of the law in us.* Secondly, The qualification of the persons which have particular interest in this Benefit, and those are, *who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.*

We begin with the first, *viz.* The Benefit it self, *That the righteousness of the law, &c.* Where first we are to explain the words, and then to come to the Doctrine observable from them. For the words, first, there are three terms which are here to be explained: First, What is to be understood by *the righteousness of the law.* Secondly, What by *fulfilled.* Thirdly, What by *us.* For the first, *the righteousness of the law,* that is, whatsoever the Law of right could require. This is *δικαιοσύνη τῆ νόμου*, not *justificatio*, but *jus legis*, the right of the Law. Secondly, By *fulfilled*, we are to understand, *perfectly satisfied and discharged* to the full in regard of this Right. Thirdly, By *us* we are to understand not *us* personally, but *us* representatively; *us* in our nature, and *us* in our Surety.

The words being thus now unfolded, there is this point of Doctrine which does immediately follow from them:

That whatsoever the law could demand and require of us, the same is fully satisfied and fulfilled by Christ. He hath fulfilled the righteousness of the law in our behalf.

For the opening of this present Point unto us, we must know, that the righteousness of the Law may be taken two manner of ways: There is a double right which the Law of God does challenge *in us*; A *preceptive* or commanding right, and a *vindicative* or avenging right. A Preceptive right, that is a right of obedience, whereby we are engaged to a compleat and exact observance of the whole law, without any transgression. A Vindicative right, that is, a right of punishment, whereby we are liable to censure and condemnation for every breach and transgression of the law in any kind. Now either of these Rights has Christ satisfied and discharged for us. First, He hath satisfied the right of obedience, in that he hath fulfilled the whole law of God in our stead. Secondly, He hath satisfied the right of Punishment, in that he hath endured all the wrath which was due unto us for our transgression of this law.

To speak of each of these distinctly; and to begin with the first, *viz. The Right of Obedience*. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us thus; forasmuch as Christ has done for us whatsoever the law in this particular did require at our hands; so *Mat. 3. 15, For thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness*: Christ by that holy life which he led here upon earth while he lived in the world, did fulfil the righteousness of the law for us *in a way of obedience*. This is the first branch of the Point. For the better understanding of this point, consider these three things: First, That there is a right of perfect and exact Obedience to the Precepts and Commands of the whole Moral Law of God, which is due from us. Secondly, That Christ in his own person hath fully and perfectly tender'd this Obedience, which is our debt. Thirdly, That this Obedience of Christ's, it does most properly belong to us, and is reckon'd and accounted as ours.

First, I say, There is a right of perfect and exact Obedience which we all owe to the Law of God. This is grounded upon the First Covenant, which God made with man in *Paradise* before his Fall, when he gave his Law unto him, and required of him obedience to it. That which God required then of *Adam*, the same does he require still of *us*, and so justly may; And that is fully to perform all the Commandments of the Law. Indeed now under the Gospel, the Covenant of Works ceases in regard of the *Condition*, and we have instead of it that which we call the Covenant of *Grace*. Then the Terms ran thus, *Do this and live*: Now, *Believe in the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved*. But yet the Obligation and Engagement is still one and the same. We are now since the Fall and under the New Testament as much bound to the keeping of Gods Law as ever were; Namely, as such Creatures which God hath given a Law unto; which for the substance, and value, and vigor of it, is still one and the same.

The second particular is this, That Christ in his own person hath fully satisfied the Law. This is as clear as the other: For as he was
born

born without Original sin, when he came into the World; so he lived a life answerable thereunto, in his whole Conversation. It is said, *He was without sin, and he knew no sin, &c.* That is, *experimentally*, as we our selves know it: Thus he knew it not; for sin it is the transgression of the Law, but this Law he abundantly observed.

Thirdly, (Which is the main thing considerable to our purpose), Christs Satisfaction of the Law, as concerning obedience unto it, is accounted as ours; Inasmuch as the Righteousness of the Law is said to be fulfill'd in *us*. Fulfill'd in *us*; How is that? Not in our *persons*, but in our *surety*, and Undertaker. This is the plain Doctrine of the Scripture in sundry places; Thus *Rom. 5. 19*, *As by one mans disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.* *1 Cor. 1. 30*, *Christ of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.* Not only Redemption but Righteousness. *2 Cor. 5. 21*, *He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* All these places, and the like, do shew, That the righteousness of Christ as concerning his obedience to the Law for the observation of it, does truly belong to us, and that we have a share in it. When we say it belongs to *us*, we mean not only *nostro commodo*, but *nostro loco*. And this it will appear to be so upon a double ground and consideration:

First, In regard of the Intention and Purpose of God himself, who does bestow Christ upon us to this end; Christ was given by God for righteousness, and for righteousness in this explication, namely of full and perfect observation of the whole Law. Now so far forth as God gives him, so far do we receive him: that God gives him thus, it is clear, *Rom. 5. 15, 17*, where we read of the *gift* by grace, and the gift of righteousness.

Secondly, As in regard of Gods Intention and gracious Donation; so likewise in regard of our Interest and mystical Conjunction, there is such a near tye and union betwixt Christ and every Believer, as of Head and Members, so that that which is done by *him*, is accounted as done by *them*; and that which is fulfilled by *him*, is said to be fulfilled in *us*: In *us* so far forth as we are ingrafted and incorporated into him, and by faith are made one with him. He hath taken our Nature upon *him*, and imputed his righteousness to *us*.

The Use and Improvement of this Point to our selves in a way of Application, comes to this:

First, As a word of singular comfort to all the true servants of God which groan under the burden of their own failings and omissions, that they come so short of Gods Commandments as they find themselves to do: this is that which is exceeding troublesome to a gracious heart, that he has so much deadness and straightness upon him in matter of duty, that he cannot do that good which he would do, and which he desires to do; and he is troubled for it not only in reference to Hell and Condemnation, which perhaps he may be sufficiently satisfied in, and persuaded that he is freed from; but he is troubled for it in reference to holiness, and sanctification, and the keeping of Gods Law; that he should live so much to Gods dishonour as he conceives himself to do. Now here I say is that which may satisfy him; Though such affections are to be cherish'd in thee

as good in themselves; yet here is that which may keep thee from dejection and discouragement under them, That in Christ there is a full amendment made for thy defects; Christ has not only fulfilled the Law for us in a way of punishment (as we shall hear afterward) and so freed us from the *curse* and *condemnation* of the Law; but he hath likewise fulfilled the Law for us in a way of obedience, and so freed us from the *checks* and *upbraidings* of the Law. And though we cannot (as I have shewn heretofore) fulfil the Law our selves in our persons, through the reliques of corruption which are in us; yet in our *Nature* and in our *Surety* we have fulfilled it; and Christs fulfilling it for us in our Nature, being apprehended by our faith, is to as good purpose, and of as good validity to us, as if we had fulfilled it absolutely our selves in our own persons. We are in as good a condition (and better to the full) by our fulfilling of the Law in Christ, who is our Surety and Undertaker, as we had been in if we had fulfilled it in *Adam* who was our first Father, and the root and head of our Nature; yea indeed we are in a great deal better.

This must be cautiously taken, that we abuse not such a sweet Doctrine as this is, as we are apt to do. Indeed we ought to mourn under our daily infirmities; we ought to strive and labour to be better; and we ought also our selves to endeavour the fulfilling of the Law in conformity to Christ, as much as if he had never fulfilled it for us; we ought to put forth an act of faith in Christs obedience and righteousness which he has wrought for us; and so doing, we may abundantly satisfy, and quiet, and comfort our hearts in the midst of all those imperfections which in this life we are subject unto: the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in Christ, and God is as well satisfied with it, as he would have been if our selves had fulfilled it. The Debt is as well paid when it is paid by the Surety, as by the Principal, especially when the Surety is willing, and desirous to pay it, as here it is. This makes much for the comfort and consolation of all true Believers.

Secondly, We may hence also take notice of the Infinite Wisdom and Goodness of God, which hath made such an happy repair of that Righteousness which we lost in *Adam*; by giving us, instead of it, that which is a great deal better for us: For the Righteousness of the Law fulfilled in Christ, is far exceeding the fulfilling of it in *Adam*, supposing that he had fulfilled it. And that upon two considerations: First, It is more full and compleat. And secondly, It is more sure and certain.

First, It is more full and compleat. For *Adams* obedience to the Law, it could at the most have been no more then just *answerable* and adequate to the Law. Yea, but now Christs obedience through the excellency and infiniteness of the person, is *transcendent* and far above the Law. Here's not only a payment of the debt, but a great deal over; which though it be not an advantage, as concerning the Condition of the Covenant; yet it is an advantage as concerning the commendation of the Grace and Righteousness it self. It is true, That if we had fulfilled the Law at first in *Adam*, we should then have had eternal life upon our fulfilling of it, as truly as we shall now have it upon our fulfilling it in Christ; but yet our fulfilling of it in Christ is more excellent, because it is performed in a more admirable and excellent

lent manner: As, for a Kings Son to pay our debt for us, is a more transcendent and meritorious act than our own payment of it would be, from the dignity and transcendency of the person; Even so is it here.

Secondly, As this Righteousness of Christ is more full and compleat, so it is also more certain and sure. That Grace and Righteousness which is inherent in our own persons, that is subject to losing, and to decay (as we see by experience already), but that which is subjected in Christ, it is not so. From whence it follows, That now since our fall, we are in a better condition than we were before: And this (I say) it does serve to set forth to us the Infinite Wisdom and Goodness of God, in bringing good out of evil, and in turning that to our greatest advantage, which of it self had so much miserableness in it; *Adams* disobedience being supplied by the obedience of *Christ*, has occasionally and accidentally proved to be our furtherance and promotion.

Thirdly, For another Use of this point, we see here the mistake of those who teach, That we have no benefit by Christs *Active* obedience, but only by his *Passive*: Who teach, That it is enough for us, that Christs sufferings are imputed to us to free us from Condemnation; But for his *Active* righteousness and obedience to the Law, that belongs not to us. These they do very much diminish from the fulness of this present Text in hand, *That the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us*. For if we have not benefit by Christs Obedience, as well as by his Sufferings; by his *Active* Righteousness, as well as by his *Passive*; Then by his coming in the Flesh is not the Righteousness of the Law fulfilled in us; forasmuch as to the Righteousness of the Law is required, not only the right of Punishment in suffering for our failings, but likewise the right of Obedience, in performance of what the Law requires to be done by us. The Arguments which they pretend for it are briefly these:

First, That the Scripture attributes our Redemption and Reconciliation to the Blood of Christ, as 1 *Job*. 1. 7. *The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin*. Now the *Blood* of Christ does chiefly denote his Sufferings and Death.

But to this we answer, That the Blood of Christ is here put by a *Synecdoche* for the whole work of his Satisfaction; And salvation and life is attributed to it, as that which does merit the imputation of Christs *Active* Obedience to us also. Besides, when it is said, *it cleanseth us from all sin*, we are to understand, that it frees us from the guilt of sin in regard of Punishment, not that it does present us as Righteous in the sight of God.

But secondly, It is objected, He that is freed from Eternal Condemnation is sure to have Eternal Salvation: But by the *sufferings* of Christ alone, without his Obedience, we are freed from Eternal Condemnation, *Ergo*.

To this we answer, That the Imputation of Christs Obedience to us is necessary for us not only in order to Salvation, but also in order to the Justice of God himself, which does require that his Law should be fulfilled, either in the Party or else in the Surety, either in us or in Christ.

Thirdly, It is said, That Christ was bound to fulfil the Law for

himself; Therefore his fulfilling of it is unappliable to us. And he was so, because as Man he was a Creature.

To this we answer, That Christ was somewhat more than meer man, and by virtue of his hypostatical Union was freed from all obligation of the Law, which would otherwise have layen upon him. Thus we see that there can no argument be produced to conclude against Christs Active Satisfaction. And so much for the first Branch of the point, That whatsoever the Law could demand and require of us in a way of obedience, that has been fulfill'd for us by Christ.

The second follows That whatever could be required of us for punishment is discharged likewise. Thus in the place before-cited, *2 Cor. 5.21, He made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin.* Sin, that is, an offering for sin, as it is usually expounded. So *Isa. 53. 6, The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all;* and *v.10, bruised, &c.* So again *Joh. 1.29, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.* So *Gal. 3.13, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us.*

This must needs be so upon this account: First, Gods Acceptation of Christ for a full and sufficient Redemption. Where the Creditor does accept of the Surety, there is a discharge of the whole debt; at least, so as the debt is transferr'd from the principal Debtor upon the Surety.

Secondly, Christs Suffering it self, which was of the whole Anger and Wrath of God, exprest in all particulars. There was no punishment for kind, which we should have suffer'd, but the same was personally suffer'd by Christ both in Body and Soul.

Thirdly, The Infiniteness of the person. And this did in particular supply and make an amends for the time and duration. For we, so far as we had sinned against an Infinite Majesty, were to have endured the punishment of our sins to all eternity; the Righteousness of the Law would have required that of us. Now this is made up in Christs person, who being God, the Dignity thereof did answer the Eternity of our punishment, in which we stood engaged. And thus we see this also proved unto us.

The consideration of this point is thus far useful to us: First, As it serves to take us off from seeking Salvation in any other besides Christ. If he hath satisfied, what should we seek after other Saviours?

Secondly, Let this comfort us, as concerning our own estate and condition; *Who shall now lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God that justifieth, who shall condemn? It is Christ that died, &c. Rom. 8.33, &c.*

Thirdly, Let us here take notice of the singular Love of Christ, who hath done thus much for us; fully paid our debts, and satisfied all that the Law could require of us in this particular.

Fourthly, Let us more study and meditate upon this present point in hand, and desire, in comparison, *to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, 1 Cor. 2.2, &c.*

And thus now have we seen the whole Point in each Branch and Explication of it, That the Righteousness of the Law is by Christ fulfill'd in us.

Now

Now further there is somewhat which we may draw as from these Branches apart, so from both together: As,

First, Observe here against the Papists, That these words in the Text are not to be understood of *Sanctification*, and the Law fulfill'd in our *Persons*; but rather of *Justification*, and the Law fulfill'd in our *Nature*. For God attains the end he aimed at; but this of Sanctification is not done, &c.

Secondly, See here that there is such a thing in reality as imputed Righteousness, which they also make such a wonder at; for a man to be accounted righteous for anothers righteousness.

Thirdly, Let us especially labour for true saving Faith, whereby we may come to partake of the Benefit of Christs Righteousness to be made over to us.

And so much for the first General in the Text, *viz.* The Righteousness of the Law fulfilled in us.

Now the second is the Qualification of the persons, *who walk not, &c.* This for the substance we have had already in v. 1. of this Chapter; only here there is a different improvement of it, which we may here take notice of.

From hence observe, first in general, That all men indifferently have not a share in the comforts of the Gospel. The Reason is this, Because all men are not fitted and qualified for them. Therefore let none too rashly and over-hastily apply them to themselves.

Secondly, In particular, observe this, That Justification and Sanctification must go together; They only *who walk after the Spirit*, have Christs Righteousness imputed to them, and have the Law fulfilled in them. The Reason hereof is this: First, Because those which are justified by Christ, they have union with Christ; and they which have union with him, must of necessity be made like unto him. He that saith, *he abideth in him*, ought *so to walk as he walked*, 1 *Joh.* 2. 6.

Secondly, Because Christ came by Water as well as by Blood; There's his Spirit, as well as his Merit.

Thirdly, Because God is exact and compleat in his works in us; and so as he justifies, so also will he sanctifie.

This may teach us, first of all, Not to separate these one from the other; but to labour for holiness of life and Sanctification.

Secondly, It shews the vanity of those who hope to be saved by Christ, whiles they live in all manner of sin.

Thirdly, Those that walk in the Spirit, they have here an Evidence of their Justification from their Sanctification.

Fourthly, We see here that it is not enough to abstain from evil, but we must also do good: Not only *not walk after the flesh*, but *walk after the Spirit*.

And so I have done also with the second General, *viz.* The Qualification of the persons. And so much of this whole 4th. Verse.

 SERMON VI.

ROMANS 8. 5.

For they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh: But they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

There is nothing more necessary for a Christian, than to understand his spiritual condition: Both what he is by reason of Sin, and the Corruption of Man through his Fall; And what he is also by virtue of Grace, and the Recovery from his Fall in Christ. Which two taken together do serve to make up a double self and being (as it were) unto him: From whence having different Principles he comes to have different Actions and Operations flowing from those Principles. Now this is that which is exhibited to us in this Scripture which we have here before us; Where the Apostle in some Verses before, having occasionally spoken of such persons as walked not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, he does here in these words which I now have read, proceed to a farther explication of this different walking, what it means; both in the causes and in the effects of it; or in the consequents and concomitants to it, For they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that, &c. Our business at this present time will be only with the first of these three, which will be enough for us at once, which is the fifth Verse of this Chapter.

IN the Text it self there are two general parts considerable: First, The difference of Persons. Secondly, The difference of Properties belonging to these Persons. The difference of Persons, that's exprest in these words, *Those that are after the flesh, and those that are after the Spirit.* The difference of Properties belonging to these Persons, is exprest in these, that the one *minds the things of the flesh*, and the other *the things of the Spirit.*

We begin in order with the first of these parts, viz. The difference of Persons here mention'd, those *that are after the flesh*, and those *that are after the Spirit.* The former is the Description of the *unregenerate*, and those which are in the state of *Nature*: The latter is the Description

tion of the *regenerate*, and those which are in the state of *Grace*. Those that are after the *flesh*, that is, those that are *carnal*, and *corrupt*, and *sinful*, and still abiding in their *natural condition*; For the word *flesh* is here to be taken not in the *natural* sense, but in the *moral*; and the word *Spirit* is here to be taken for the *Spirit of Grace and Regeneration*. And so hereafter either is to be given and added to either. Now these words being thus explain'd, there are *two points* which do here offer themselves to us: First, The *universality* of these *two states and conditions of men*. And secondly, The *contrariety*. In reference to the *universality* of them, so the point is this, That all kind of persons living in the world are *one* of these *two*, Either such as are *after the flesh*, or such as are *after the Spirit*. According to the *contrariety*, so the point is this, That these two are *opposite* and *contrary* one to the other.

First, To take notice of the *universality* of these two states and conditions, as they do divide and make up the whole world; for so they do. All men living are one of these two; to wit, either in a state of *Nature*, or in a state of *Grace*; either *after the flesh*, or else *after the Spirit*. Indeed by *Nature* all men are in the *first* of these states, that is to say, *after the flesh*; *We are all by nature*, as the Apostle tells us, *children of wrath*, Eph. 2.3. But there are some whom God hath graciously brought out of this condition, and when they were *dead in sins*, hath *quickened them*, as it is also there signified; and these are such as are *after the Spirit*; who though they have still the *flesh* in part remaining in them, yet notwithstanding are said to be not *after the flesh*, because they do not *absolutely* yeild to the *motions* and *suggestions* of it; but do *resist* it, and set themselves against it. But then again, there are others who are still yet remaining in their sins, and under the power of them, who walk according to the course of this world; according to the Prince of the *power of the air*, the *Spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience*, as it is there again also exprest.

Therefore let us every one *search* and *examine* our selves in this particular, and observe how the case is here with us; Whether we are such as are *after the flesh*, or which are *after the Spirit*; For one of these two we are, and needs must be, either *righteous* or *unrighteous*, either *regenerate* or *unregenerate*, either the *children of God*, or the *children of the Devil*. As there is not a middle place betwixt Heaven and Hell, so there is not a middle state neither betwixt Sin and Grace. And it is a matter of great concernment to us to know which of these two we are, as a ground to us either for our *abasement*, or for our *improvement*; either for our *amendment* and *reformation*, or for our *encouragement* and *consolation*. If we be of those that are *after the flesh*, that being humbled and abased in our selves, we may labour to *come out of this condition*, and endeavour to get our *Natures changed*. And if we be *after the Spirit*, that we may bring forth the *fruits of the Spirit*, and lead an *holy and spiritual life and conversation*. And if we live *in the Spirit*, that is, have a *principle* of spiritual life in us; that we walk *in the Spirit*, that is, have our *course* answerable to this *principle*, Gal. 5. 25.

This it may be much discovered by us according to the Principles
I that

that act us, and prevail in us, and whereby we are for the most part carried; by what we most favour, and relish, and delight in, and give our selves to, as we shall see afterwards in the other part of the Text. And that's the *first* Observation in reference to the *universality* of these two states and conditions in this world, in that all men whatsoever are to be ranked in *one* and *either* of them.

The *second* is in reference to the *Contrariety*, in that they are *opposed* here one to the other, in the *adversative* particle [*But*]; for so indeed they are. Look as the *flesh and spirit* it self are said to be *contrary* one to the other, *Gal. 5. 17*; so in like manner are the *persons* that are *acted* and carried by each; these are *contrary* likewise: and so the *Scripture* also else-where represents them, as *2 Cor. 6. 14*, *Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth, with an infidel.*

The *contrariety* of these two sorts of persons one to the other, is considerable in sundry particulars: as, First, The *contrariety* of their *Principles* which they are carried by; and that is, *of flesh, and of spirit. The flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to another, Gal. 5. 17.* There's a people scattered abroad, and dispersed amongst thy people (says Haman to Abasuerus), and their *Laws are divers from all people. There's a different Law, and Rule, and Principle, which does act and move the Servants of God, than does other persons.*

Secondly, The *contrariety* of their *Aims, and Projects, and Designs*: Those who have different and contrary *Ends* which they do *set down and propound to themselves*, they must needs be contrary to one another: Now thus have those who are *after the flesh*, over those that are *after the spirit*; their *Aims and Ends* are different and contrary. For whereas the *latter* especially aim at *Gods glory*, and the *advancement of his Kingdom*, and the *salvation both of themselves and others*; the *former* aims at the *fulfilling of their lusts*, the *promoting of the Kingdom of Satan*, and the *making of others the children of Hell*, either as *much or more than themselves*. The *former* aims at the *things of the flesh*, and the *latter* at the *things of the spirit*, as is here exprest.

Thirdly, The *contrariety* of their *Courses, and Actions, and Conversations*: This is *another* thing which makes up this *contrariety* to us, as *observable* in them. The *one* sort of persons, they are such as *do walk after the flesh*; and the *other* are such as *do walk after the spirit*, as we have it intimated and exprest unto us in the first Verse of this Chapter. Thus *Phil. 3. 18, 19*, *There are many (says the Apostle Paul) who walk so; as enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, &c. But our conversation is in Heaven, &c.*

The consideration of this Point is thus far useful to us, First, As it gives an account of that *enmity* which is *in the one to the other*; Why those who are the *Children of the Devil*, do commonly so much *hate and malign*, and oppose those who are the *Children of God*; it is clearly from hence, Because they are *contrary* one to the other, of *contrary Principles*, of *contrary Ends*, and of *contrary conversations*; the seed of the
Woman,

Woman, and the seed of the Serpent: *He that is born after the flesh, will be sure to persecute him that is born after the spirit, Gal. 5. 29. Marvel not my brethren, if the world hate you, says the Apostle John, 1 Joh. 23. 13. And our Saviour himself gives us the reason of it, why we should not so marvel, Joh. 15. 19, If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but hence ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*

Secondly, We see here also, how unsuitable it is for those who are good, to have intimate society and familiarity with those who are evil, and to delight and take contentment in them; forasmuch as they are so far opposite and contrary one to another. *Wd unto me (says the Prophet David) that I am constrained to sojourn in Mesbeck, and to dwell in the tents of Kedar. And, Depart from me ye which are wicked, for I will keep the commandments of my God, Psal. 119. 115.* Godly persons they are (as it were) out of their element, when they are cast into ungodly Society.

Thirdly, We have from hence a discovery likewise of the excellency of the Kingdom of Christ, and of the efficacy and power of the Gospel, which makes such an admirable change and alteration as we may observe it to do, in bringing these things and persons which are so directly opposite and contrary to each other, into so near and close a conjunction and compliance one with another; in bringing men from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God; from Hell even to Heaven it self. This is the nature of conversion, To deliver us from the power of darkness, and to translate us into the Kingdom of Christ, as the Apostle expresses it to us there in that place in Col. 2. 13. And this is the fruit of Conversion, That it makes those to be the greatest friends, which were formerly the greatest enemies; *The wolf to dwell with the lamb, and the leopard to lye down with the kid, and the sucking-child to play upon the hole of the asp; that is, those who were of the crossdest natures, to be of the sweetest and most according dispositions, as the Prophet also expresses it to us in Isa. 11. 6, 7, &c.* And so now I have done with the First General Part of the Text, which is, *The difference of persons here mentioned, both in their universality, and their contrariety, Those that are after the Flesh, and those that are after the Spirit.*

The Second is the difference of Properties as belonging to these persons, and that is, That the former do mind the things of the flesh, the latter the things of the spirit.

First, To speak of the former, which is the property of all carnal and unregenerate persons, such as are yet abiding and continuing in the state of Nature, and here express to be *after the flesh*. This is that which is here declared of them, as proper to them, That they do mind the things of the flesh. By flesh here in this place we may understand two things: Either such things as are absolutely evil, as the lusts of the flesh; or else such things as are occasionally evil, as the things of the world, Riches, and Honours, and Pleasures, and such things as these, they are the things also of the flesh, and which carnal persons mind. Thus Job. 6. 8, *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; in the mind flesh, in the affections flesh, &c.* And again ver. 31, *He that is of the earth, is earthy, and he speaketh of*

the earth, &c. Phil. 3. 18, the false teachers are described by this mark, *That they mind earthly things.* Psal. 4. 6, *There be many that say, Who will shew us any good?* that is, any outward or temporal good; that's the main good which they mean and aim at in such an enquiry, as we may guess by the opposite to it.

When it is said here that *carnal persons* do mind *carnal things*, and they that are *after the flesh*, the *things* of the flesh; this *minding* it may admit of a *various* explication to us: First, They *mind* them in a way of *apprehension*; that is, they *understand* them, and know what belongs unto them, they are well skill'd and expert in them: This is *one* property of *carnal* and worldly persons, That they are best seen and *knowing* in such things as these are. *Worldly men* are best able to judge of *worldly matters*; as for the *things* of the *spirit*, matters of *grace* and *holiness*, and the works of the *new creature*, here they are plainly *ignorant* and *unlearned*, *unskilful* in the word of *righteousness*, Heb. 5. 12. But for the *things* of the *flesh* and *outward man*, the improvements and advancements of the *World*, here they are *most skilful*, and that upon this account; Because, as it is here express'd, *they are after the flesh*: Every one is still *most capable* and *apprehensive* of *such kind of matters* as he hath a proper *genius* for, and disposition and inclination to; now this have *carnal persons* to *worldly things*, and to such matters as feed corruption in them; they have a *suitableness* and an *agreeableness* to them, and from thence come the better to *apprehend* them, and to know what belongs unto them. They *mind* them, that is, they *understand* them in a way of *apprehension*. That's the *First*.

Secondly, In a way of *Affection*: They *mind* them, that is, they *favour* them, and *relish* them, and take delight in them: the word in the *Greek*, *τὸ φρονεῖν*, it carries *such a sense* as this with it, as applicable thereunto: *Worldly men* they do *most taste* and *affect* worldly things. As they have such things as these most in their *understandings*, and so do *apprehend* them; so they have such things as these most in their hearts, and so do *embrace* them. *Worldly persons*, their hearts are *set* upon the *World*, and it is the most delightful thing to them of any thing else; they *suck* it, and *squeeze* it, and *draw out all the sweetness* from it *that possibly they can*; there is nothing more *pleasing* to them, than to have an *abundance* of these outward comforts, which they *relish* above any thing else; and they *admire* them also in others; they are the very *joy* and *solace* of their hearts.

Thirdly, In a way of *contemplation*. They *mind* them, that is, they *think* upon them; such things as these are the chiefest *study* and *meditation*, and which their thoughts are most exercised about. If ye could but *rip up a carnal mans heart*, and anatomize him, and see what were in him, ye should see nothing but such things as these are. These are such mens thoughts when they are *alone*, and retired and private to themselves; as it was with *that person* in the Gospel, Luke 12. 14, whom God call'd *fool* for his labour, and told him, that *that very night his soul should be taken away from him*; it is said of him, that he thought within himself, saying, *I will pull down my barns, and build greater, and will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* These were the things which ran in his mind

mind, and which his thoughts were exercised about; and so is it likewise with all others of the same temper with him. Those that are after the flesh, they do most contemplate the things of the flesh, and they are such as are the chiefest matter of their Thoughts and Meditations; according to that general Rule of our blessed Saviour, Where your treasure is, there also will be your heart.

Fourthly, In a way of *Activity and Contrivance*. They mind the things of the flesh; that is, they *progg and lay out* chiefly for it. They bend their chiefest study and endeavour to *promote* such things as these are. In *Rom. 14. 14*, the Apostle gives this Exhortation to Christians, *To make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof*. This is that which carnal persons are for the most part guilty of. As they think most of the flesh, so they think also most for it, and lay out their chiefest thoughts and consultations about it. They seek opportunities for the flesh; and they seek how to *accomplish* and to *improve* these opportunities. All their business lies in this, how they may *compass* and *effect*, and bring to pass their carnal designs which they have projected to themselves. Thus *Psal. 36. 4*, it is said of a wicked man, *That he deviseth mischief upon his bed, he setteth himself in a way that is not good, he abhorreth not evil*. And so *Mic. 2. 1*, it is spoken of the same kind of persons, *that they devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds, &c.* Thus in all these several ways, and according to these several explications, do those who are *after the flesh* mind the things of the flesh; By way of *apprehension* to understand them, by way of *affection* to savour them, by *contemplation* to study them, and by way of *contrivance* to design them.

Now the ground of all this (to give you some account of it) is *two-fold*: First, That inward principle which does all them, and prevail in them. This is a sure Rule, That every thing doth after its kind. Nature it is a most certain Principle wherever it is. Now thus it is with such kind of persons; *That which is born of the flesh is flesh*, as we had it in the place before-cited. What's the reason, that the Fire ascends and goes upward; And that a Stone descends and goes downward. Why, it is because either of them have a principle in them, which does incline them hereunto. Even so it is here in this particular, as to carnal persons, and carnal things. Swine they take delight in mud, because it is most sutable and agreeable to their *swinish* Natures; And so do worldly men in the things of the world upon the same account and consideration likewise.

Secondly, There's Satan also who has a further stroke and influence here-upon. He is the Spirit that *works in the children of disobedience*, *Eph. 2. 2*. he makes it his business all that may be, to promote these things in them, by his suggestions, and instigations, and concurrences, and assistances of them. So long as any persons are in a *natural* and *unregenerate* estate, so long are they under the Regiment of the Devil, who has a great deal of power over them. And they that are so, cannot possibly do other than *evil* upon all occasions, as having so many advancements and promotions of it in themselves.

The consideration of this Point may be thus far useful to us: First, As a sad discovery to us of the state and condition of the generality of

people in the world; and more especially in these present days where-in we live; who according to this Character which the Holy Ghost himself gives of it must needs be counted and esteemed as *those that walk after the flesh*; forasmuch as they mind little else than *the things of the flesh*. And that according to either *notion* or *acceptation* of it which we mention'd before, whether we take it for things *absolutely evil*, as the *lusts* and *works* of the *flesh*; or whether we take it for things *occasionally evil*, as *riches*, and *pleasures*, and *honours*, and the *outward things* of this life. These two taken together, do take up the minds, and thoughts, and affections of the *greatest number* of people. Some there are of that temper and disposition, as that they mind nothing else but their *lusts*, and the accomplishment of their base desires; and do all they can for the feeding and nourishing of them; put themselves upon *sinful temptations*, and run into *sinful places*, and expose themselves to *sinful occasions*; and as if *wickedness* would not come *fast enough* alone and of it self, they do all that they can to promote it, and advance it, and put it forward. Surely such as these, they are with a witness *after the flesh*; and may be very well stiled and denominated *carnal persons*, as being no better. But then there are *others* not much different from them, and which come somewhat near unto them; and they are such as mind the things of the *flesh* in the second acceptation; that is, which look after nothing but the world and the vanities and superfluities of *that*; which mind nothing but riches, and pleasures, and honours, and secular advantages. These are the only things which they study, and savour, and delight in; and that sometimes even such as would be thought to be *better affected*. There are many that have *Religion* in the *profession*, but the *world* in the *affection*, and in the *prosecution*, which pretend to the things of the *Spirit*, and which *mind* the things of the *flesh*; who instead of *using* the world, and *enjoying* of God, do rather *use* God and *enjoy* the world. These they are in a very *sad condition*, if they did but consider it and apprehend it; but so much the worse, as they do not consider and apprehend it; and are worse than they commonly take and think themselves to be, as in that respect more unlikely to be delivered from it.

Secondly, We may learn from hence the necessity of *regeneration* and the work of the *new Creature*, in order to an *holy life to be led by us*, and the freeing of us from the power and dominion of sin in us; Because so long as *men are carnal*, they *will be sure to do carnal things*; And the one it does infer the other, by way of inevitable reciprocation; Those who mind the things of the *flesh*, they are *after the flesh*; and those who are *after the flesh*, they do mind the things of the *flesh*. They are such points as hold *convertibly*, one with the other. Therefore as any desire to do that which is good to any purpose, or to abstain from that which is evil, they must labour to have their *Natures changed*, and to become *new men*. Ye shall have some kind of people in the world, who sometimes finding their lusts to be troublesome to them, do now and then in some faint manner, and with their reservations, resolve against them, and think that hereupon they shall be freed and delivered from them, who yet notwithstanding are afterwards more intangled with them, and intral'd and captivated to them than

than they were before: And what's the reason of it, but because they still retain the same Principles and Affections in them?

This is a sure Rule, That so long as *the heart* is not changed, *the life* will not be changed neither. Either ye must make *the tree* good, and his *fruit* good; or the *tree corrupt*, and his *fruit corrupt*: For a good tree bringeth not forth evil fruit; neither does a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit, as it is *Mat. 12. 38. and 7. 18.* It is therefore most necessary for us in reference to a *good and holy life*, to understand wherein the *true method* of Reformation does indeed consist; and that is briefly thus: That a man being fully convinced of the sinfulness and wretchedness of his state and condition by *Nature*, and the All-sufficiency of *Christ*; does accordingly *close with Christ*, and *accept* of him upon the conditions of the Gospel; from whence there being a near union knit betwixt him and *Christ*, there is answerably *the spirit of Christ* bestowed upon him, changing and altering of him, and renewing him in the spirit of his mind, and bestowing a new nature upon him. And being thus qualified and disposed (and not before) he does then come indeed to hate and to decline the things of *the flesh*, and (as it follows afterward in the Text) to *mind the things of the spirit*: So that till this change and alteration be made, and this work of Grace indeed wrought in the heart, there is no likelihood that any one should be freed or delivered from the power of his lusts. For *corrupt Nature* (as I said) will *all like it self*; and they that are carnally disposed, will be carnally minded.

Thirdly, Let all men from hence make a trial and proof of themselves, what they are: Here's an help to self-enquiry and examination of a man's own estate, which is a most necessary business, and whereupon does very much depend their greatest comfort and satisfaction; by considering what is that which is most *minded* and intended by them. There are a great many people which would fain go *for religious persons*, and flatter themselves into a good opinion in this particular, as if they were indeed regenerate, and renewed, and born again: Now let them according to this Rule in the Text, take a true, and infallible, and impartial account of themselves, and see indeed without any *self-deceit* (which is the worst of all) what indeed they are. Dost thou admire, and adore, and applaud the things of the world, set thine heart inordinately upon them, lay out thy chiefest *thoughts* about them, value and esteem both thy self and others by them, and such things as these are: Thou art then most certainly a carnal person, one that is as yet but *after the flesh*, in the very *gall of bitterness*, and in the *band of iniquity*, as *St. Peter* of *Simon Magus*. And it is not all the *outward good duties of Religion* which thou must perform to the bargain, which are any exemption or discharge to thee. Though these are things which are also to be done, yet if there be not somewhat else, and somewhat more which is joined with them, they will not avail or serve the turn to free thee from being a *carnal person*, nor consequently from the *misery and wrath* which does attend such a condition; Because there's not the worst men that are, but they may do some things which are outwardly good, and which carry a shew of piety in them, whiles they are *inwardly* and substantially *naught*. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the *First Property* which is here propounded to us, namely, of carnal and unregenerate persons, and such

such as are after the flesh, and that is, that *these do mind the things of the flesh.*

The *Second* is the Property of those who are *spiritual and regenerate*, and that is, that *such as these they do mind the things of the spirit*; that is, Heaven and Heavenly things, Grace and Holiness, and such means as do tend to the working, and preserving, and encreasing of such things as these in them; these are the *matters* that are minded by them. Thus in the place before alledged, *Joh. 3. 6, That which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit.* Thus *David, Psal. 4. 7, Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.* And *Pf. 63. 25, Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee.* And *Phil. 3. 20. But our Conversation is in Heaven.* *1 Co. 3. 2. 8, The liberal man deviseth liberal things, &c.* Now it is ealie to give an account hereof unto us, as well as of the former, which we may take *thus*:

First, *Spiritual persons*, they have their minds enlightned to discern of *spiritual things*. The reason why most kinds of people do so little regard the things of the Spirit, is indeed because they do so little know the things of the Spirit, nor discern, and apprehend, and understand that excellency which is in them. *Ignoti nulla cupido, That which men do not know, they do not desire.* Now such persons as are *after the Spirit*, they do know the things of the Spirit, and are acquainted with the worth of them. *The spiritual man judgeth all things, 2 Cor. 2. 15.* And again in the 12th. Verse of that Chapter, the Apostle speaking of himself and other regenerate persons with him, hath this expression about them, *Now we have received, not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.* This is that which true Believers do by a special light of the Spirit; neither can they indeed know it or discern it by any other light, as to any good purpose.

Secondly, As *spiritual persons* have an enlightning of their understanding to discern these things; so they have a touch also upon their hearts to *suit* with them, and to correspond unto them. Look as I shew'd before, the things of the *flesh* are most agreeable to carnal persons, in the nature of the *things themselves*; so are the things of the spirit likewise to those who are *after the spirit*. *Gracious persons* they are said to have the *law of God written in their hearts*, to be *born from above*, to be *made partakers of the Divine Nature*, to be *renewed in the spirit of their minds*, to have the *seed of God remaining in them*; and such phrases and expressions as these, as are used about them. Now all these do import an inclination therefore to spiritual things.

Thirdly, They have moreover the *Spirit of God himself* dwelling and abiding in them, who is a *faithful Monitor* to them, and *exciter* of them to that which is good. Look as the evil spirit does dwell and rule in carnal persons, and does from thence take an occasion to provoke them to carnal things; so does likewise the good spirit, the *Spirit of God*, dwell and rule in *spiritual persons*, and does from thence take an occasion to provoke them to *spiritual things* also, and does *pitch* them, and *fasten* them upon them; so that if they will but hearken and listen to *him*, they shall be sure to be carried out to them.

The Use of this point to our selves may be drawn forth into sundry particulars: First, As it calls us to search and examination of our estate in this respect; and to see how it is indeed with us. There is nothing more necessary for Christians, and those that profess Religion, than to be able to make it out to themselves, that they are such as are truly *regenerate* and *after the spirit*. Now here does the Holy Ghost in this Scripture give us a plain Character of this in us; whereby we may be able to *discern* whether it be so or no; And that is according to our *minding of the things of the Spirit*: If we *do* mind them, then we are so; And if we *do not* mind them, then we are *not*. For these words here in the Text must be taken not only *emphatically*, but also *exclusively*, as in the former Branch of it. This is the Property of *spiritual persons*, and of none other besides. Therefore let us *judg our selves* by it, and bring our selves to *this Rule*, by examining how far we do conform hereunto; and that according to all the several explications of this *minding*, which we laid down before in reference to the *things of the flesh*, in Apprehension, in Affection, in Contemplation, in Contrivance, and the like. Whatever was said there of *those things* and the *minding* of them, the same is also here applicable to *these things* and the *minding* of them. Let us therefore here first of all reflect and consider with our selves, what *understanding* and *apprehension* we have in us of the *things of the Spirit*, and which belong to our *eternal salvation*, and how far we are able to *reach* them, and to *dive* into them. For men to be well skil'd in *other things*, as concern this *natural life*, in bargains, and purchases, and adventures, and worldly commodities, and in the mean time be *ignorant* of Religion, and Regeneration, and the *work of Grace in the heart*; What does this discover in them, but little *interest* in such things as these are. For certainly, where-ever there is a *title* to these things, there's a *knowledge* of them, and some ability to *discourse* about them; And where there is not this latter, the former may be very well suspected. Thus ye know it was with *Nicodemus*, a great *Rabbi* and Master in *Israel*, who was probably well skill'd in *other things* which concern'd him in the way of a *Pharisee*; and yet when Christ came to talk with him about this business of being *born again*, how *childishly* and *ridiculously* did he speak of it, as one that had no knowledge or understanding at all of it. This was a sad and heavy case.

So again, As for the *Affection* to these things; Let us *examine* that. Men are then said to *mind* those things indeed when they *favour* them, and have some relish of them. Now how is it to this? Alas, there are a great many people that do it not at all. The Word, and the Sacraments, and Prayer, and the Communion of Saints, it may be they are present at them, and in a formal and customary manner partakers of them, but they relish no sweetness in them at all. Take any other matter, as plays, and toys, and pastimes, and tricks, and sinful sports, the *things of the flesh*, and which serve for nothing else but to feed the flesh and corruption in them, oh these they relish perfectly, and have a sensible favour of them, they are very pleasing and delightful to them, and they could be content sometimes to spend their whole time and life in them. But the Ordinances and means of Grace, and the opportunities of Salvation, the Scriptures, and the Preaching of the Word, &c. these are dry

dry, and jejune, and dilute and insipid things to them; As the Lord complains of his people, *Hos. 8. 12, I have written unto them the great things of my Law, but they were counted as a strange thing.*

And so likewise for *Contemplation*. What are the things which we chiefly meditate and think upon in our greatest retirements, when we are solitary, and alone by our selves? Is it these things of the spirit, yea or no? *Oh how I love thy law, says David, it is my meditation all the day, Psal. 119. 97.* And he says, *his eyes prevented the night watches, that he might meditate in Gods word. When I awake* (says he in another place) *I am still with thee.* And accordingly he makes it the note and character of a good and blessed man, That *his delight is in the law of God, and in that law he doth meditate day and night, Psal. 1. 2.* Gracious and heavenly persons, they are full of gracious and heavenly thoughts, which they still exercise and employ themselves in upon all occasions; whereby the temper and frame of their spirit is very much discover'd and discern'd to be that which it is.

Again, For Counsel, and Contrivance, and Design; How is it here? What's the business which we do most of all study, and endeavour, and beat our brains about? Is it the great things of the world, how to improve our selves, and enlarge our selves here? Or is it, to get grace into our hearts? to get the evidence and assurance of Gods love and favour in Christ? to *work out our salvation, and to make our calling and election sure?* These are the things of the spirit; And if we be indeed such persons that are *after the spirit*, they will be above all things to this purpose minded by us; as is here intimated to us.

I beseech you, let us seriously call our selves to account in these particulars, as we shall one day be call'd to an account by God himself, what it is in which we spend our time, and strength, and power; and that as at all times, so especially on the Sabbath, or the Lords day, when we should especially be in the Spirit; Whether we are so, and what we make to be the main work and business of it, whether the duty of our outward man, or more especially the looking to our inward.

Secondly, This point may be improv'd in a way of Information. From hence to give us an account of that industry, and diligence, and endeavour which is in sundry kinds of persons after spiritual things. It seems to be a wonder sometimes, especially to some kind of persons, to see the eagerness that is in some kind of people after Religion and the things of God; sparing no cost, nor time, nor pains for the prosecution of them; but preferring them before all the pleasures and delights of the world; Never almost well, but when they are either reading, or hearing, or praying or meditating, or conferring, or doing somewhat or other which might promote both themselves and others in a way of Salvation. Here's now the true ground and reason of it, Because they are *after the spirit*; And so spiritual things do most sure and agree with them. And therefore let no man think much of it, or be troubled or offended at it. Thou who art ready to wonder at it *now*, thou wilt thy self do the like *hereafter*, if ever God shall be pleased so far to be gracious to thee, as to put such a *spirit* and *principle of spiritual life* into thee. When thou comest to be thy self spiritual, then wilt thou also be spiritually

ritually affected, and spiritually employ'd, for *Idem quà idem, semper facit idem*, as we use to say in Philosophy; The same as the same, it always does the same: and where there's the *like disposition*, there will consequently be the like operation.

Thirdly, This Point may likewise serve in a way of *excitement*, and especially to those who are true Believers, and the Servants of God, and in that respect and consideration spiritual persons; That they would endeavour more to *show* themselves to be so, by such a property as *this* is which is before us, of *minding the things of the Spirit*; for it is that which sometimes is too much failing even in such as these, though perhaps they may mind the things of the Spirit for the *main*, and in a *general* and *habitual* sense; yet truly they do not always mind them so much *actually* and particularly as it *becomes* them to do; but do now and then discover too much of a contrary principle in them, to the dishonour of God, to the scandal of Religion, to the corruption of others, to the grieving of the Spirit, and to the prejudice of their own comfort and inward peace: As it was said sometime to *Peter*, so it may be said to many of these, *Thou savourest not the things of God, but the things of men*; and thou mindest not the things of the *Spirit*, but the things of the *flesh*, which for such a time do *prevail* in them. Now let all such as these consider how *unworthy* and *uncivil* this is for them so to do, whenas notwithstanding their *spiritual profession*, and notwithstanding their *spiritual principles*, they do no more mind the *things of the Spirit*, than in such cases as those they do. Here is cause of *great shame*, and reproach, and blushing, and consternation to them.

And further, Here's an happy way also, whereby to *recal* and *recover* themselves in such miscarriages; Whenas spiritual persons do at any time find themselves *more carnally inclined* and addicted to the vanities of the world, and the things of the flesh, to reason it out thus with *themselves*, as most unsuitable to the Principles which are in them, and that new and *sanctified Nature* which God hath been pleased to bestow upon them in their first conversion to him.

And so I have done also with the *second* Property here mentioned, as belonging to true Believers, and the Regenerate; And they *that are after the spirit*, the *things of the spirit*.

SERMON VII.

ROMANS 8. 6.

For to be carnally minded, is death; but to be spiritually minded, is life and peace.

There is not a greater difference betwixt good and bad men in their Principles, than there is also in their Conditions; nor in the things which come from them, and are done by them, than in the things which happen to them, and are done upon them; Even as much as betwixt Life and Death, betwixt Happiness and Misery, betwixt Peace and Eternal Destruction. And this is the scope and drift of this Scripture which we have here now still before us. The Apostle having in the Verse before which we handled the last day, the fifth Verse of this Chapter, told us of the different practice and disposition of different persons; How that they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; and they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. He does here now in this Verse which we have in hand, proceed to the laying down of the opposite state and condition of each, one to the other. For to be carnally minded is death: but, &c.

IN this present Verse before us, we have a description to us of the different *End* and *Issue* of those which are carnal, and of those which are spiritual; as in the former we had a description of their different carriage and disposition. And these two taken together may serve to make up to us the parts of the Text; The end of the carnal is death, of the spiritual, life.

We begin first of all with the First of these parts, viz. The end and condition of all carnal persons, so remaining, and still continuing; and that is here exprest to be Death; To be carnally minded is Death. By carnal-mindedness, τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, (as it runs in the Original Text) we are to understand the whole corruption of the Soul, in the full latitude and extent of it. All the dispositions and operations, whether of Understanding, or Will, or Affections, as they are in Man now since his Fall. Both λόγον καὶ ἡμῶν, as the Philosophers use to speak; these we are

to

to conceive of by it. And accordingly it hath *different names* put upon it, some reading it the *wisdom and understanding of the flesh*, others the *meaning and desire of the flesh*, others the *savouring and lust of the flesh*; Solomon calls it, the *Inventions, Chisloneth*, Eccl. 7.29. Moses calls it the *Imagination, or Frame and Composure*, Effer. St. Paul calls it in another place, *τὸ κατὰ τὴν σαρκὸς* that is, the *fleshy mind, or wisdom of the flesh*. By *Death, θάνατος*, we are to understand, not only *corporal*, but also *spiritual and eternal Death*. This for the explication of the *terms*, and the meaning of the *words* which are here used. Now the *point of Doctrine* which we observe from them, it needs to be no other than the *ver. Text* it self, *That to be carnally-minded is Death*, that is, the *whole frame and composure of the Soul*, as consider'd in its unregenerate condition, and as it stands by corrupt nature, it tends to absolute Destruction.

Here's the *Subject* of this Proposition, and the *Predicate*. First, The *Subject*, the *carnal mind*. This we may see made good in the several Branches of it: As, First of all, take it in the *mind and understanding*, which is the *higher* part of the Soul, and called by the Philosophers *τὸ ὑψηλόν*, as that which should *rule* all the rest. This it is corrupted and depraved, and so tending to *death*. Thus Rom. 1.22, the Apostle speaking of the *Gentiles*, says, *They became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, professing themselves to be wise they became fools*. And Eph. 4. 18, *Having their understandings darken'd, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance which is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts*. And we may see it and take notice of it in these several distempers; As,

First, There's *ignorance* of the things of God, and which concern our own Eternal Salvation. Jer. 4.22, *They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledg*. 1 Cor. 15. 54, *Some have not the knowledg of God*.

Secondly, As there's *ignorance* in the *mind*, so there's also *curiosity* and an *affectation* of the *knowledg* of such things as belong not to us; That's another *distemper* of the *mind*, and which shewed it self first of all in the world. There's a great deal of wantonness upon mens understandings in this particular, Job. 21.21. & Ait. 1.7.

Again, *Darkness of apprehension* when we are taught, as the Disciples, *slow of heart*, Luk. 24.25. Mark 16.14. So also *Error and Heresie*, which the Apostle Paul reckons amongst the *works of the flesh*, Gal. 5.20. And so evil plottings, and divisions, and contrivances, Mic. 2. 1. Thus we see the *carnality* of our *reason* and *higher part*.

This it may serve to humble us, and lay us low in our own thoughts. The *Papists* they many times speak of sin, as if it were only in the *inferior* faculties of the Soul; and confined to them in the *sensitive appetite*, &c. Nay but it is as well in the *higher powers* of the Soul also, and there chiefly and most of all. There's *ignorance*, and *vanity*, and *error*, and *corruption* in the *mind*. *To the pure all things are pure, but to them that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure*; but even their *mind* and *conscience* is defiled. That which is *best* of us, it is by *nature* tainted in us.

This (by the way) shews us, what *ill Judges* of the *things of God*,

and the matters of *Religion*, such persons are as are *meerly carnal*, and have no more but the light of reason in them, which is so much dimm'd and obscured by sin. It is as if *blind men* were to judg of *Colours*, which is very improper and impertinent, as having no power or ability for such a thing as *that is*. And so we see also what little cause any have to be *proud* of their Wits and Understandings, and such abilities in them, which are so much *vitiating* and *depraved* unto them. And this for the *carnality* of the *understanding*.

Secondly, As there is corruption in the *understanding*, so likewise in the *will* and *affections*. The *flesh* *lusts* against the *Spirit*, *Gal. 5. 17*. And *v. 24*, the *affections* and *lusts* they are both joined together, as who should say *lustful affections*. *Eph. 4. 19*, they are said to *have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to commit all uncleanness with greediness*. *Job 15. 26*, speaking of a carnal person, it is said, that *he drinks in iniquity as water*. *Jer. 8. 9*, *Every one turneth to his course, as the horse rusheth into battel*. These and the like places declare the viciousness of the *will* and *affections*; And it is clear also by *experience* it self, for an *unregenerate* man he cannot desire any *spiritual good*; namely, as *so* consider'd, and in *that reduplication*. He may desire it so far forth as it hath any conjunction with some *natural* or *temporal good*; but as purely *spiritual*, he hath *so* no mind unto it; but is rather carried to a great deal of evil which he does will and affect.

This it first of all teaches us, How *impotent* and *unable* any one is by *nature* to his own *conversion*, whiles we are *depraved* in every part of us, and the very *wisdom of the flesh* is thus *obnoxious*. What sufficiency can there be in us, even to the *thinking* of any thing which is good, as the Scripture sometimes expresses it.

Secondly, We see here also Gods Goodness in his *powerful* and *valorous* Grace, in that he suffers Corruption to break out no further sometimes than it does; If not by wholly *removing* it, yet at least by *restraining* it; whiles man carries so much wickedness within him as he does in regard of the *habit* of sin; what a wonder is it, that he does no more wickedness (though what he does he too much) in regard of the *acts*? And thus much for the Explication of this *carnal-mindedness*, wherein it consists, to wit, in the depravation of all the powers and faculties of the Soul, in *understanding*, *will*, and *affections*.

Now further Secondly, Here is considerable of us the *Predicate*, what is declared concerning it, as to the *evil* and *mischievousness* of it; and that is, that it hath the name of *Death* fasten'd upon it. The *Spirit of God* makes choice of such an expression, as might most of all terrifie and affright us; and move all such persons as are yet remaining in their *natural condition*, to labour to come out of it as soon as may be, in the use of such means as God hath *appointed* and *sanctified* to this purpose. And it is further exprest by *Death* rather than by *Deadly*, to make it still so much the more *emphatical*. This is a point which is clear from abundance of Scriptures, as *Rom. 7. 23*, *Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Death*. So *Rom. 8. 13*, *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall dye*. And *Jam. 1. 15*, *Sin, when it is conceived, bringeth forth death, &c.*

When

When it is said here in the Text, that *to be carnally minded is death*, we are to take *death* in the full latitude and extent of it, whether *Temporal*, or *Spiritual*, or *Eternal*.

First, It is in a sort, and in a sense, *Temporal* or *Natural Death*. This it is not always *presently*, or *actually*, and in the *effect*, as experience does many times shew; For there are many *carnal* persons that live, and live also a great while in the world; if we speak of the life of *nature*, and the multiplying of days *here*: But yet for all that, in a *sense*, *carnal-mindedness* may be said to be *death*, even in reference to this, as that which hath *corporal death* attending it, and belonging unto it, and that we may take it according to these following explanations.

First, It is so *originally*, and as the first *occasion* of this Death. This *temporal death* it first came into the world by *carnality* and the *wisdom of the flesh*. This we may see in the first threatening and inflicting of it. The *sentence* that past upon our *first Parents* in *Paradise* upon supposition of their eating of the forbidden fruit, *Gen. 2. 17, In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely dye*; that is, thou shalt become a *mortal creature*, and be put into a *dying condition*. And so *Rom. 5. 17, As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; even so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*. Where we have an account given us of *death* coming into the world, as occasioned and introduced by *sin*: and so *sin* may be called *death originally*.

Secondly, It is *death* also *Demeritoriously*; It is that which does *deserve* death, even *corporal* and *temporal death*, and is exposed to the *danger* of it. That man who is *carnally* affected, and especially that does *vent* and *express* it in *carnal actions*, he is liable even to the loss of his *natural life*; and it is *Gods* mercy that keeps him from it there, where he *deserves* it. Take a wicked and ungodly person that lives in a way of *sinfulness* and *carnality*, and he is in jeopardy every hour, as concerning the *death of the body*; and every thing almost is up in arms against him, and ready upon the *least word of God* to inflict it upon him.

Thirdly, This *carnal mind* it is oftentimes also *temporal death actually*, and in the consequence of it. There's many a man who by his sin and wickedness does hasten and procure *his own end*. *Be not over-much wicked; why shouldst thou dye before thy time?* says the Preacher in *Eccles. 7. 17*. By *Luxury*, and *Intemperance*, and *Uncleanness*, and such courses as these which are *the fruits of the flesh*, and the results of a *carnal mind*, does this *natural death* come upon them sometimes before they are *aware*. And thus we see, how *to be carnally minded is death*, by taking it in its *natural* acceptation.

Secondly, It is *death* also *spiritually*, which is somewhat further here intended. It is *enmity* against *God*, as it follows in the next Verse to the Text; and it is a *deprivation of the life of God* which should be in us: So far forth as this *prevails* and takes place in any person, *The Wisdom of the flesh*; so far forth is he stark *dead* as to any good which is to be done by him. Of this *death* we have mention often made in Scripture; as *Eph. 2. 1*. and *Col. 2. 13, You which were dead in sins, &c.* This, it hath all the *properties* of death in it, of coldness, of loathsomeness, of senselessness, and such things as these, which I cannot now insist upon. *Carnal-mindedness* it is *death spiritually*.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It is also *death eternal*. And this is that which is principally intended here in this place, as the *worst* and *greatest* of all: *The wages of sin is death*, Rom. 6. 23, that is especially of *eternal death*, which consists in the *eternal separation* of the soul and body from God, in *Hell*; with the consequent infliction of all pains and torments thereupon. This fleshly wisdom it is death *thus*.

We need to give no other account hereof unto you, than that which follows afterwards in the Text (which in its time and place we shall God willing speak unto), and that's this, *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God*; and *those that are in the flesh, cannot please God*. It is the observation of the Heathen Orator, *Quem oderint perire cupiunt*. Those which any persons *hate*, they do in a sort desire their *destruction*. If a man find his Enemy (says Saul) will he let him go well away? Why thus now are all carnal persons in regard of God; they are plain enemies to him, and he is a perfect enemy to them whilst they so remain and continue. And how then can they think or expect to fare from him who hath life and death in his own hands, to dispose of them as himself pleases? Surely in such a case as *this* is, carnal-mindedness can be no other than death in the full latitude and extent of it.

Now the consideration of this Point may be thus far useful to us: First, As it teaches us to take heed and beware of such an *Enemy* as this is: for as it is an enemy to God, so it is an enemy to us also, and endeavours our utter undoing. And therefore I say, Let us be *foye* of it. In any thing which we are at any time to do, or *not* to do, let us take heed of hearkening to the *Flesh*, and to the motions and suggestions *thereof*, for *that* will be sure to advise to the *worst*, and to that which makes most against us, even that which tends to our eternal ruine. This is the nature and condition of the flesh.

And the Reason of it is this, Because it is not only *naught* and *evil* in it self, but has also an ill *promoter*, and helper to set it on. For Satan he commonly takes part with the *Flesh* against our Souls, and joins issue with our own Corruption. Therefore whenever we hearken to it, we do consequently hearken to him. The contrary hereunto therefore was the care of the Apostle Paul as to himself, Gal. 1. 11, that he *confer not with flesh and blood*; that is, not with those things which his carnal mind dictated unto him. This a man must never do, that makes account ever to come to heaven. When God at any time strikes a mans conscience, and works in him some kind of inclinations of turning to himself; or else calls a man to any special service or duty, which is to be done by him; let him not in this case consult with the flesh, his own ease, or credit, or profit, or worldly advantage, or any such thing as this, which is very *hazarding*, and not without a great deal of danger and peril which is in it. Who would consult with a traytor and enemy as to his own welfare? Why, such now is this *fleshly wisdom*, &c. No but rather with the word of God, and the principles of a renewed spirit, which are the *best Counsellors*, Psal. 119. 24.

Secondly, Seeing this is so, That *to be carnally minded is death*, in the judgment of the Apostle Paul, or rather of the *Spirit of God* in him; This may then serve very much to *awaken* all such persons who as yet remain in their *natural* and *unregenerate* estate. Surely they are
in

in a very sad condition as possibly can be, being at the present but *men of death*, as the Hebrew phrase expresses it. They may walk and go about as *living men* in regard of *this life of nature*; but for any other life besides in reference either to *Grace* or *Glory*, here they are plain *dead men*, and have *no life at all*. And this should very much affect them; and go to their hearts: We see how it is with men for the most part as to *natural* and *temporal* death, how shy and afraid men are here, and of any thing which threatens it to them; and yet how mindless and regardless are they of this *spiritual* and *eternal death* upon them, which is the chiefest of all.

There are divers persons who have great need to this purpose to be awakened out of this *dead condition*. First, All *Worldlings*, who savour of nothing but of the *earth*, and of the things of the *earth*. All whose thoughts, and desires, and affections, and meditations, are taken up about these outward things *here below*, for the encrease and improvement of them; who make *Heaven* not the *Principal*, but only the *Accessory*; not the thing which they mainly aim at, but only as a matter by the *by*: that think perhaps somewhat must be *done* now and then in a way of *Religion*, only to satisfy the world that expects it from them, or to stop the mouth of Conscience which would be otherwise ready to *upbraid* them, and to flye in their faces: but it is done all the while with a very *carnal* and *worldly* spirit, and no heavenly affection at all in them. Such as these have very great cause to consider this present Doctrine and Point in hand, as laying before them the *miserable condition* in which they are: We shall find *these two* expressions joyned together in *one Verse*, *Whose end is destruction*, and *who mind earthly things*, Phil. 3. 19: Because the *minding of such things as these*, to wit, with that eagerness and intention as such commonly do it, it is such as *threatens destruction*, as *tending* and *leading* thereunto. It threatens the death of *condemnation*, because it implies the death of *corruption*. Threatens the deprivation of the life of *Glory*, because it implies a deprivation of the life of *Grace*; it being impossible for that man who is in *love with the world*, to have the *love of God in his heart*.

Secondly, Here may be likewise warn'd and admonisht occasionally from this present truth, all such persons as *content themselves* in a meer abstaining from *grosser sins*, and the *outward acts of the flesh*, and *carnality*, whiles in the mean time they *savour* and *indulge* themselves in inward and *secret lusts*: For, even *to be carnally minded is death*, as it is here express'd, though there be no more but so. It is not only the outward expressions which God will punish, but as well the inward affections; not only him that maketh a lye, but him that *loves* it. And so for any other sin or abomination whatsoever: The *very thought* of foolishness is *sin*, as *Solomon* tells us, *Prov. 24. 9*. And God, who is the *Judge* of the thoughts, will accordingly call to account for it; and therefore *Peter* advises *Simon Magus* to *pray to God*, if so be the thought of his heart might be forgiven unto him, *Act. 8. 22*.

Thirdly, Hereby also are admonisht all vain-glorious and Pharisaical persons, who have nothing in them but a *form of godliness*, whiles they *deny the power thereof*, as the Apostle speaks, *2 Tim. 3. 5*. who have nothing in them but meer Civility, and Morality, and common honesty, as

they call it, which were in many even of the *Heathen Philosophers* themselves, as we have it recorded to us. Though we do not speak against such things as these simply consider'd, which for the matter of them have some commendation in them; yet we say they are not enough or sufficient to salvation, and to keep or preserve a man from this *Death* which is here mention'd in the Text. *Except your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven,* says our blessed Saviour in *Mat. 5. 20.* Therefore whosoever thou art, labour to find somewhat *more* than this is, in thee; and that is, thy *carnal mind* to be taken away from them. Labour to find *thy heart changed*, and a *new bias* and inclination put into thee, over what thou hadst by *nature*: An hatred of sin as sin, a love of goodness as goodness, a delight in God for himself. Be convinced of thine own emptiness and natural insufficiency, and get a sight of the *beauty* and *excellency* which is in *Christ*, and to get thy *conscience purged from dead works*, that thou *mayest serve the living God*. Labour to find a *spirit of mortification* and *self-denial* to have past upon thee, and a serious purpose and endeavour to serve God in sincerity and new obedience; otherwise all thine outward *singularity* and *regularity* will do thee little good, as *St. Paul* himself acknowledged when he came to be converted, counting all his own righteousness to be no better than dung and dross in his esteem. *Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

To set home this further upon us, let us take in these Considerations with us:

First, That this *carnal mind* it perverts the greatest *humane excellencies* and *perfections* which are considerable in any; their *Wits*, and *Parts*, and *Understandings*, and such things as these. A man that has these without *Grace*, he is but a *dead man* for all that: Though he may make a *fair shew in the flesh*, *ὡς ποικίλον ἐσθλόν*, as the Apostle speaks *Gal. 6. 12*; yet he is but like a *carcase* which is deckt with flowers, which still retains its rottenness and unfavouriness in it self notwithstanding. Men that have Wit and Reason without *Grace*, they are many times but more puffed up with it, and thereby made more incapable of *Grace* than otherwise they would be; wholly like the Devil himself, who hath more knowledge and understanding than any man, but because he is void of *Grace*, he therefore uses what he hath against God, and thereby comes to be in a *damned condition*. This is the condition of all your *learned Hereticks*, and the promoters of *false doctrine* in the world: and this is the condition of all your *carnal Politicians* and the promoters of *evil courses* in the world; their *carnal mind* it is in conclusion death unto them, as *perverting* their Abilities in them.

Secondly, This *carnal mind* it corrupts even the *best duties*; it makes those performances which being considered in their own nature are *good*, yet coming from such a person that performs them, to be turned to sin unto him; Because the Principle from whence he performs them, is not right in him. *The sacrifice of the wicked* (says *Solomon*) *is an abomination to the Lord*; how much more when he brings it with a wicked mind? *Prov. 21. 27.* and a *wicked mind* is a *carnal mind*, as the Holy Ghost himself accounts it, and esteems of it. Men may pray, and

and read, and hear, and receive the Sacrament, and do all such duties as these; and yet whiles they are no more but carnally affected *in them*, receive little benefit by them; yea, not only no benefit, but *harm*, accordingly as they may order it *to themselves*. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lords body*, says the Apostle Paul of that performance, 2 Cor. 11. 29. Therefore let none rest themselves in such things as these are, as to the bare performance of them; but labour to have *hearts* in themselves suitable and agreeable to them, and to be *spiritually* affected in them; considering this with themselves, That they are not only accountable to God for those actions which are *absolutely sinful* as to the *matter and substance* of them, but also which are *sinfully* perform'd by them, as to the *manner and carriage* of those actions, though in themselves both good and necessary. Men are then said to be *carnally-minded*, not only when they grossly are employed in the *ways of wickedness*, but also when they are *carnally-employed* in the *duties of holiness*. And it is such as does also *expose* them thereupon to *condemnation*. There is no less than *death* in the *pot*.

This *carnal-mind* it invenoms the *greatest comforts*, and takes away the *profitable use* of all the creatures that are, from us: Though *Dominion* be not founded in *Grace*, nor a *natural and civil* right to the Creature dependent upon a *regenerate condition*; yet a *sanctified* right to it is thus dependent: Take a man in his natural condition, and out of Christ, and there's no creature whatsoever that he does partake of, can be truly blest and made good unto him; neither can he without sin partake of the *sweetness* of it. The *very plowing of the wicked is sin*, as Solomon tells us, Prov. 21. 4; that is, his very common and ordinary performances. And the Apostle Paul in Tit. 2. 15, *To the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure, &c.* And so 1 Tim. 4. 4, *Every creature of God is good, being received with thanksgiving*. Now there is none that can be truly thankful, that are absolutely carnal. Carnality it puts a poyson and venom into every creature.

Hence it is that it is exprest *indefinitely*, *To be carnally-minded is death*; namely, in whatever condition a man be in, *in regard of the world*, whether rich, or noble, or powerful, or whatever we can think of. Let a man have never so great a confluence and abundance of these outward things which men commonly so much prize and affect, and judge themselves to be *alive from*; yet a *carnal man* is a *dead man*, even then when he lives; as it is said of a person that lives in *pleasure*, and in *loose and voluptuous courses*; which may serve still very much to awake such kind of persons as these are, and that in the midst of their security and self-applause, like the voice to *Nebuchadnezzar* when he was priding himself in his *Babel*; and like the hand-writing upon the wall to *Belsazzar* when he was solacing himself in his *Cups*; and like the speech to that fool in the Gospel when he was pleasing himself in his possessions, *This night thy soul shall be taken away from thee, and then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?* Luke 12. 20.

Therefore let all men take heed of being lifted up with such things as these are, so as to say that *by these things men live*; and to place all

kind of happiness and contentment in them. For alone it belongs not unto them. There is nothing here in this world which is any further comfortable to us, and matter of rejoicing indeed, than as we have grace to use it to Gods glory, and as it carries us and leads us to better things above it self. The very blessings of wicked and carnal persons, they are indeed *curst unto them*, as not having them from Gods love in *Christ*, but only upon the terms of *common providence*, which is incident even to the beasts themselves, and the *unreasonable creatures*; yea sometimes also (which is worse) in *Judgment*, as *snares* and *stumbling-blocks* to them. And so now I have done with the First general part of the Text, *viz.* The End of the *carnal mind*, which is *Death*.

The Second is the *End* of the *spiritual*, which is exprest in *two* terms to us, in *life* and in *peace*; Each of these is such as is consequent to *spiritual-mindedness*, in those who are the *Subjects* of it.

First, *spiritual-mindedness* is *life*; That's *one* thing which is attributed to it, as a *priviledg* attending upon it. Where as before of *death*, so we must take *life* also in the *latitude*; for in a sense it holds good even so also: First, For *temporal and natural life*. Godliness it hath the *promise* of this; and not only the *promise*, but the *accomplishment*; *It shall be health unto thy navel, and marrow unto thy bones*, Prov. 3.8. And again, v.16 of the same Chapter, *Length of days are in her right hand*, &c.

Secondly, For *spiritual life*; This *spiritual-mindedness* it is this life also in sundry regards:

First, *Originally*, as proceeding and springing from this life. Those that are spiritually-minded, they are so from the Spirit of life which is in Christ himself, and communicated to them who are members of him. *The Law of the Spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, hath made me free*, &c. *Spiritual-mindedness* it is the good fruit of a spiritual heart, which is the good tree; And therefore it is said in the verse before, which we have already handled, That *they which are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit*; namely, as consequent to such a *condition*.

Secondly, *Objectively*. *Spiritual-mindedness* it is *spiritual life* so also; Forasmuch as for the *matter* of it, it is *conversant* about things of that nature, as *Grace*, and *Conversion*, and *Regeneration*, and such things as these. Look as the carnal mind on the other side, it is chiefly exercised about those things which do concern the *life of sin*; so here the spiritual mind also, it is chiefly exercised about such things as do concern the *life of grace*.

Thirdly, *Operatively*. *Spiritual-mindedness* it is *spiritual life* likewise so; Forasmuch as it does very much tend to the preserving, and strengthening, and nourishing, and increasing of this *spiritual life* in us. The more *spiritual* we are at any time in our thoughts, and desires, and affections, and meditations, and the like, the more happily do we maintain and keep up a spiritual vigor and life in *our selves*. And thus is it *life spiritually*.

The third and last notion of *life* which is here signified, and that indeed which is mainly intended, is that it is *life eternal*. As to be *carnally-minded* is *eternal death*, as we shewed in the former Branch; so

to be *spiritually-minded* is *eternal life*, which we may take notice of in this. And so the Scripture does sufficiently declare unto us, as in *Gal. 6.8*, *He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.* And so *Rom. 7. 9, 10*, *Tribulation and anguish to every soul that doth evil: But glory, honour, and peace to every soul that doth good.* And *Gal. 5. 22*, the fruits of the spirit exclude the curse of the Law.

If we would know whence this comes about, surely from the *Justice of God*, who hath so ordained it, *Seeing it is a righteous thing with God, &c. 2 Thes. 1. 6.* But Justice, how? Namely, as being true to his *promise*, and *fulfilling his word*; God hath made himself a debtor to us. It is not our *spiritual-mindedness*, or any good work of ours whatsoever, which can merit or deserve this life at Gods hands; but that God has of his infinite goodness and bounty so appointed it; and God hath made *spiritual-mindedness* to be the way to true happiness and eternal life; so that none shall attain to *this* without *that*; and none shall be deprived of *this* that hath *that*. *Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,* says the Apostle Paul, *Rom. 6. 23.* It is not by *merit*, but by *gift*, yet by *gift* depending upon *Promise*.

The Use of this point to our selves may serve, First, To stop the mouths of such persons as cavil at the ways of Religion, as fruitless and unprofitable courses, and as having no great matter in them, as might move or persuade men to them. We see here that they have *life* it self, which is that which men of all things do most regard. And they have especially *eternal life* in them, which men of all things should most regard. Those that have *this*, they have *life*; because they have God and Christ himself, who is the *true life*; yea, there's no life to purpose to any that have not *this*. Indeed this *life* it is not presently seen or discern'd by us; it is a secret and conceal'd life. We are for the present in appearance *dead*, and *our life it is hid with Christ in God*. But *when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory*.

Secondly, It may also satisfy in all the present evils which we suffer. When *this* life shall be taken away, there's *another* and a *better* life a-coming, which will make amends for all; And therefore let those who are *spiritually-minded* not be any thing *discouraged*. That's the First Branch of *Accommodation* which attends upon this heavenly disposition; namely, *Life*.

The *Second* is *Peace*; Which may be taken either in the *Generical* notion, or in the *Specific*. If we take it *generically* and *comprehensively*, so it does imply in it all kind of *happiness at large*; it being usual with the *Hebrews* to express all kind of *good* whatsoever under this name, so as when they wish to any persons *peace*, they did under that expression pray for their absolute welfare and success. If we take it *specifically* and *restrictively*, so it does point out that blessing which is *properly* and *peculiarly* so called, and that in all the several kinds and distributions of it. And thus indeed do I rather take it here in this place, the *Blessing of Peace*, as it is call'd, and which God hath promised to bestow on his people, *Psal. 29. 11*. This is that which is

here signified to belong to *spiritual-mindedness*. *Grace and Peace* they go together: *Psal. 119. 165, Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them. Prov. 3. 17, Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. Rom. 2. 10, Glory honour, and peace to every one that doth well; To the Jew, &c. Gal. 6. 16, As many as walk according to this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, &c.*

And *Peace* as I said in the full extent: First, With God himself; *Being justified by Faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. 5. 1, &c.*

Secondly, With a man's own self; *Peace of Conscience, tranquillity of spirit, quietness of mind. Grace* it is of a calming and composing nature, it puts all things into a state of quietness.

Thirdly, With others. It reconciles men of contrary natures. *When a mans ways please the Lord, he shall make his very enemies to be at peace with him, Prov. 16. 7.*

The ground of all this is, First, The *Gift and Legacy of Christ*: It is that which he hath bequeath'd to his Church when he departed from it, *Joh. 14. 27, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you.*

Secondly, The nature of *Grace* it self, and the manner of the working of it; that also lays a ground hereunto; for it composes the passions of the mind, and scatters the distempers of it; and from thence occasions peace unto it.

This may serve to shew us the great difference betwixt the children of God, and other men; betwixt those that are *spiritually-minded*, and those that are *carnal*. As for this latter, they have no share in peace as belonging unto them; they have nothing to do with peace, as was said of *Jehoram. The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast forth and dirt. There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God, Isa. 57. 20, 21.* Carnal and worldly-minded persons they do oftentimes vex and perplex themselves with their own thoughts, which do fret and eat into them. But those who are spiritual, they are satisfied and quieted in themselves, as having the true grounds and foundations of true peace within themselves; as, the love and favour of God in Christ, their sins pardon'd, their natures cleansed, their corruptions subdued, their souls healed, and at last sure to be saved. They are such as have *life*, as was signified in the branch before: and therefore must needs have peace, which is following upon it; and therefore here in the Text also joined unto it.

But are not the Children of God even themselves sometimes short of peace? Yes, they seem to be, at least, for a while; but yet they have peace in conclusion, for all that:

First, As to God himself: They seem sometimes to be at a distance from him, and he seems also to be at variance with them; but yet so, as that afterwards they grow more in the apprehensions of his love and favour towards them. Gods children have never greater assurance than sometimes after greatest doubtings and questionings of his love to them; as after a storm there comes a calm.

Secondly, As to their own selves: They are sometimes void of peace here; not being able so clearly to discern their own Graces, nor the integrity

grity of their own consciences : But this makes them so much the more to search themselves, whereby at last these things come to be more cleared and evidenced unto them.

Thirdly, As to *other* men. They do sometimes want also peace here. But God sanctifies it to them at last for their greater good, and they get some benefit and advantage or other by it. Thus are they still sure of Peace.

And thus have we seen both parts of the Text laid open unto us, in the issue and consequents of *carnality*, and the workings of the *flesh*; *To be carnally-minded is death* : And in the issue and consequents of *spirituality*, and the operations of *Grace*; *To be spiritually-minded is life and peace*.

So that now I may say to *you*, as *Moses* said sometime to the *Israelites*, Deut. 30. 11: *I have set before you life and death, good and evil, blessing and cursing* : and therefore chuse to your selves which of these two you will take ; or rather indeed be *exhorted* and *over-persuaded* to chuse the first ; To eschew evil, and to do good : To cast off the works of darkness, and to put on the armour of light : To abandon the things of the flesh, and to mind the things of the spirit. *For to be carnally-minded is death; but to be spiritually-minded is life and peace.*

SERMON

SERMON VIII.

ROMANS 8. 7.

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God, &c.

There cannot be too much said to make us out of love with sin, and the extravagances of a carnal heart, for which we have need of continual remembrances of us, and instructions one upon another. Now this is that which we here meet with in this present Scripture. The Apostle having in a Verse before, to wit, the first Verse of this Chapter, made mention of carnal-mindedness; he does proceed to declare the evils and inconveniences of it. And first, He shews it to be death, in the verse immediately preceding, which we handled the last day. Death, as I then told you, in the whole latitude and extent of it, whether natural, or spiritual, or eternal. And here in the Verse before us, he shews it to be worse than Death, whiles it is enmity even to God himself; Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, &c. So that this Verse it is in a manner a proof and demonstration of the former. Whatsoever is enmity against God, it must needs be deadly, yea even death it self. Now such is the carnal mind; And therefore no better than Death. The major in this Syllogism is supposed and taken for granted: And therefore the Apostle undertakes only the proof of the minor, which he does here in this Verse which I have now at this time read unto you.

IN the Text it self there are Two General Parts considerable: First, The Proposition. And Secondly, The Confirmation. The Doctrine, and the Ground of that Doctrine. The Doctrine or Proposition, that we have in these words, *The carnal mind is enmity against God.* The Ground or Confirmation of this Doctrine, that's in these, *For it is not subject to the Law of God, &c.*

We begin with the first of these Parts, viz. The Proposition, *The carnal mind is enmity, &c.* Whosoever they be that are in a state of nature, they are in a state of enmity. Whosoever they be that are unregenerate, and

and as yet unconverted, they are so far forth *enemies to God*, and God to *them*. This is the point which we have here before us, as observable of us; and it is agreeable to *other Scriptures* besides; as *Jam. 4. 4, Ye adulterers and adulteresses; know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, he is an enemy of God.* So *Rom. 5. 10, When we were enemies, we were reconciled unto God.* And *Col. 2. 22, You who were sometimes alienated and enemies, &c.*

This must needs be so, Because man hath fallen from God through his first transgression in *Adam*, and so broken that sweet peace and league which was betwixt *God and Him*. Now till this be repair'd and made up again in *Christ*, there must needs be *enmity* following thereupon. And this is the case with all men in their *natural estate*: *Their iniquities have separated betwixt them and their God*, as the Prophet *Isaiah* sometime expresses it. This is the sad consequence of sin which does happen to man from his *Apostacy*; That whereas there was *once* an happy accord and agreement betwixt *him and his Creator*; now they are become *absolute enemies* and opposites *one to another*. They are now (as is said of the Gentiles, *Rom. 1. 30.*) *inimici*; *haters of God*, as also *bateful to him*.

This at the first hearing seems to carry some kind of *strangeness* and *unconthness* with it; and it is such as some kind of persons will hardly believe, or be perswaded to the acknowledging of it, that either God should hate them, or that they should hate him: But yet there is nothing more true than this is; and those who do most of all question it, are sometimes most involv'd in it. There are none who are *greater enemies to God* in good earnest, than many of those who do least of all suspect this enmity in themselves; and therefore the Scripture is not sparing in using such expressions as these, as we find it in the second Commandment, where God is said to *visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him*; as implying that such persons there are.

For this purpose we must know thus much: First, That as *friendship* does properly consist in *willing and nilling the same things*; so *enmity* does properly consist in *willing and nilling the contrary*. He is *interpretatively* an *Enemy* (let him pretend what he will) whose *will* is in all things *opposite and contrary* to the will of *another*. Now forasmuch as it is thus with *carnal persons* towards *God* (as will afterwards more fully appear out of the following part of my Text) it must needs from hence follow, whatsoever they may think of themselves, that they are indeed no better than plain *Enemies* to him.

But then again, Secondly, *Carnal men* are said to *bate God*, according to that *notion and apprehension* which they have of him, and that is as indeed very *opposite and contrary to themselves*. It may be thought, that because God is *good*, yea very *goodness it self*, that therefore he should not be *bated* even by the *worst* men that are. But we must here know, that there is a *double goodness* in God: There's the goodness of *Bounty and Kindness*, and there's the goodness of *Purity and Holiness*. There's the Goodness of God as he is the Creator and Preserver of the World. And there's the Goodness of God, as he is the Law-giver and

Judge of the world. Now although according to the *former* notion of him, so they do not *hate* him; that is to say, in his Bounty and Kindness, as he is the Creator and Preserver of them, and does bestow upon them all good things which at any time they enjoy; yet in the *latter* notion of him, that is to say, in his *Purity* and *Holiness*, as he is a *Law-giver* that does limit and restrain them, and as he is a *Judge* that does summon them, and call them to an account, and pass sentence upon them, and punish them for their breach of his Commands, so far forth they do perfectly *hate* him, and are *enemies* to him. Wicked men may *fawn* upon God sometimes, but they do not *love* him.

The consideration of this Point may be thus far useful to us. First, As it may serve to convince us of the *vile nature* of *sin*, and may *engage* us so much the more against it. Is not that a *vile business*, which causes a *difference* and *variance* betwixt the best and sweetest *Friends*? And that sets them in *hatred* of one another, that did sometimes most lovingly agree? Now this is that which *sin* hath done to us: It hath *defaced the Image of God* in us, from whence we were once most *lovely* and *amiable* to him. What's the *chief Image of God*, and wherein we were at first created? It is (as the *Apostle* expresses it) *righteousness* and *true holiness*. This was that which made us likest to him; and *likeness* is the ground of *love*. But now by *sin* and *apostacy*, this *likeness* and *image of God* it is *destroyed* in us; so that God looks upon us in *this condition* as no other than *objects* of his *hatred*. *If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him*, as he says in *Heb. 10. 38*. Now this we have done in our first fall and transgression, we have *drawn back* from him.

Secondly, We see here the *miserable condition* of all such persons as are in their *natural estate*; surely it must needs be very *sad* and *lamentable* whiles they so remain: for as they are *enemies to God*, so is God also an *enemy to them*; and he that has God for his *Enemy*, whom shall he make his *Friend*? That which is noted of the *proud* in particular, is true of *all* wicked persons in *general*, That they are such whom God *resisteth*, and pitcheth direct *battle* against them. And the *Scripture* has sundry expressions tending to this purpose; where it is said, that he will make them his *footstool*; that he will *slay* them; that he will *crush* them and *break* them in *pieces*; that he will *tear* them, so as there shall be none to deliver them. This is the state and condition of such persons as are *enemies to God*, and He to them. And we should not look upon them as meer expressions, but as carrying a great deal of weight and reality in them.

And consequently there is this Use withal to be made of it, as pertinent to it; Even to persuade such persons as these to labour as soon as may be to come out of this *wretched condition*, and to make their peace with him. It is an ill thing to be upon terms of *enmity* with God, who is a *consuming fire*, as the *Scripture* expresses him. We are easily sensible (for the most part) of having *enmity* with men, and being under the displeasure of *great persons* here in the world; oh but it is a *fearful thing* indeed to fall into the hands of the living God, as it is in *Heb. 10. 31*. *Thou, even thou art to be feared; and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?* *Psal. 76. 7*. And again, *Psal. 90. 11, Who knoweth*

eth the power of thine anger? for even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he? 2 Cor. 10. 22. Fury is not in me, says he, (that is, unless I be provoked) who would set the briars and thorns against me in battel? I would go through them, I would burn them together; or rather let him take hold on my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me; as it is Isa. 27. 4, 5. There is no standing out in opposition against this great God. Therefore I say, Let all carnal persons be here perswaded to come in and make their peace; to lay down that enmity which is in themselves, and to endeavour to be reconciled to God. We read in Acts 12. 20, that when Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon, and had an hostile mind towards them, intending to make war against them (*θυμωμένος*), that they came with one accord unto him; and having made Blastus the Kings Chamberlain their friend, desired peace, because their Countrey was nourished by the Kings Countrey. Why thus now it should be with such persons which we now speak of, in reference to God. The King of Heaven is highly displeased and angry with them, and intends war against them, if they hold in the way in which they are. Now therefore let them come with one accord unto him; let them make Blastus their Friend, the Kings Chamberlain: who is that? Even the Lord Jesus Christ himself, the Son of God, that lyes in his bosom, Joh. 1. 18; the man that is his fellow, and that hath most interest in him, Zech. 12. 7. Let them go to him, and make him their friend, that so they may the better speed in such a business as this is; and that because their Countrey is nourished by the Kings Countrey: that is, they are wholly dependent upon him, and have all that they have from him, who may remove it, and take it away from them whensoever he so pleaseth.

Especially considering further, how little able they are to defend themselves in opposition against him. Wo unto him that strives with his Maker. Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth. Let such do as that King in the Gospel, who being unable to meet his adversary, and to deal with him, whiles the other was yet a great way off, sent an Embassador, and desired conditions of peace with him, Luke 14. 31, 32. This they have so much the rather encouragement to do, forasmuch as he himself does in a manner meet them half-way, and offers terms to them of peace himself. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20, Now then we are Embassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead to be reconciled unto God.

Thirdly (for another improvement of this point), Is it so indeed, that carnal persons are no better than enemies to God? We see then from whence it comes to pass that they are no better friends to Gods Children; Because they love not him that begat, therefore they love not them that are begotten of him; as our Saviour himself has to this purpose accounted it to us, Joh. 15. 18, 20. Therefore the world hate you, because it hated me first.

Fourthly, Let this also teach us to take heed of too much intimacy and familiarity with such kind of persons; should we love them that hate God? O take heed of that by all means. The Prophet David was of another temper, and professes himself so to be, in Psal. 139. 21, 22,

Do I not hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? And am I not grieved with them that rise up against thee? Yea I hate them with a perfect hatred, and count them to be my enemies. Indeed in some sort we are to love them, namely, so far forth as they have any thing of God in them, as they are his Creatures, and have any good natural gifts bestowed upon them. But so far forth as they do at any time fight and take part against God, so far forth they are to be odious to us. *Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore wrath is upon thee from before the Lord,* says the Prophet there to *Jehoshaphat*, in *2 Chron. 19.2, &c.* We should love wicked men so far forth as to endeavour to *make them better*; but not so far forth as to close with them such as they are; and that upon this consideration, Because they are enemies to God himself.

And so now I have done with the *First General Part* of the Text, which is the *Doctrine or Proposition* it self in these words, *The carnal mind is enmity against God.*

The Second is the *Proof or Confirmation* of this Doctrine in these words: *For it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.* These words may be considered of us *two* manner of ways; Either first of all *simply and absolutely*, as they lye in themselves: Or, Secondly, *respectively and argumentatively*, in their *Inference and Textual Connection.*

First, Take them *absolutely* in themselves; and so *two* things more: First, The simple *pravity and disparagement of carnal-mindedness*, and that is, *that it is not subject to the law of God.* Secondly, The further enlargement and amplification of this Disparagement, *Neither indeed can be.*

First, Here's the simple *pravity and disparagement of the carnal mind, It is not subject to the law of God.* *Corrupt Nature*, it is a *rebel* against *Gods Law*, as it is *enmity against God himself.* This is here signified unto us, as it is also in other places. Thus *Gen. 6. 5,* The *very imagination or whole frame of the thoughts of the heart of man is only evil, and that continually.* *Psal. 53. 1, 23,* *Corrupt are they, they have done abominable iniquity; there is none that doth good, &c.* *Psal. 58. 3, 4, 5,* *The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, &c.*

This is so, and will appear to be so, upon these Considerations: First, From the prevalency of another Law in such persons in whom this carnal mind is. *No man can serve two Masters*, as our Saviour has told us. Now the *Law of sin* it rules in carnal men, and therefore the *Law of God* cannot. Indeed the best of *Gods Servants* themselves, they have somewhat to do with the law of sin also, as the Apostle *Paul* complains of himself in *Rom. 7. 22, 23.* but yet it is in some manner *mortified and subdued* in them. But as for *natural and carnal persons*, in them it fully *reigns.* And how should they then be subject to a law which is quite opposite and contrary thereunto? *For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage*, as it is in *2 Pet. 2. 19.*

Secondly, Another ground of this Point may be taken from the *spirituality* of the Law of God. The Law is *spiritual*, but men themselves are *carnal.* Take the Law in the bare *outward letter* of it, and so even *unregenerate persons* may in some things submit unto it, as that young rich man in the Gospel which pretended to be a follower of Christ; when

when he was bid to keep the Commandments, *Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not steal, &c.* Alas! says he, *all these have I kept from my youth*, Mat. 19. 20. Kept them! how had he kept them? namely, as to the external sound of them, and in abstaining from the grosser acts which were prohibited by them. He had kept them thus. But when our Saviour there put him upon a practice of self-denial, in the reviewing of his covetousness, and worldly-mindedness, and earthy and carnal affections, then he shewed and discovered what he was, and how far short and defective he came of Gods Commandments. And so it is likewise observable in a great many more in the world of the same temper with him: They are for the keeping of Gods Law so far forth as they think it may any ways comport with their lusts and corrupt desires: but when it thwarts them and crosses them here in their pride, in their worldliness, in their envy, in their formality, and such things as these are, here they depart from it, and are experimentally concerned to be opposite and contrary to it.

Thirdly, There is likewise moreover observable such a *perverseness* in man's heart by nature, as that the *Law of God* it rather makes him *worse* than makes him *better*; as the Apostle again complains of himself, That sin *took occasion* by the *Commandment*, and by it *slew* him, Rom. 7. 8, 11. A carnal heart from occasion of those sins which the Law *forbids*, comes sometimes even to *commit* them.

This Point which we are now upon (for the Use of it to our selves), First, Serves to give us an account of so much *transgression* of the Law as there is; namely from hence, That mens *carnal-mindedness* does still remain *in them*, as not taken away *from them*. Therefore there is so much *iniquity*, because there is so much *carnality*; so much *serving* of the *flesh*, because there is so much *wisdom* of the *flesh*. *The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason*, Prov. 26. 16. And yet he is not *without a reason* neither, at least some *shadow* of reason for that which is done, or *not* done by him. There's no man that is guilty of any sin, but he hath somewhat to say for himself, either to *nullify* it, or else to *extenuate* it; either to *justify* it, or to make it *less*; either to make it no sin at all, or to make it no very *great* one, where it is acknowledged to *be* one. *Carnality* it has always its shifts whereby to clear all, and secure it self: And there's no man that goes to Hell it self, but that have a *Reason* (such as it is) why he should go thither.

Secondly, We learn from hence also how to come to be *conformable* to God's Law, and to be *obedient to the commands* of it; and that is, by denying and contradicting *our carnal Reason*. If the *wisdom of the flesh* be not *subject to the law of God*, then so far forth as any desire to be subject to this Law, it concerns them to *renounce* this wisdom, and not to hearken to the suggestions of it, which will be sure still to move us to that which is contrary hereunto. Thus the covetous man, his *fleshy wisdom* perswades him to keep to himself that which is his own, and to do no good, or at least not answerable to his ability, with that Estate which God has bestowed upon him. Thus the *Ambitious* man, his *fleshy wisdom* perswades him to mind his own advancement in the world, and not to regard the *dangerous circumstances* which attend him
in

in such adventures. Thus the tender and soft-spirited man, that's all for his own ease and quietness, his fleshly wisdom persuades him to *spare himself*, and not to venture a certain enjoyment for a dubious and uncertain expectation. Thus in all particulars does this carnal-mindedness incline men to the worst, so that if they be led and guided by that, they shall be sure never to keep any commandment of God at all. And therefore, as they desire to do *this*; so they must renounce and cast off *that*.

Thirdly, This gives us also an account of that *wickedness* which is sometimes observable even in persons of *great parts*, and *wits*, and *natural accomplishments*; namely, because they are as yet but *carnal*, and have reached no further than the *wisdom of the flesh*, which in the highest adorning of it, is yet *below* the Law of God; and not only short of it, but also opposite and contrary to it. If men have no more but *this* in them, they may notwithstanding be found to be *transgressors*; and so oftentimes are, and that upon the account of this Truth which we have now before us.

One thing more before I pass this Branch; and that is the *phrase* which is here used for *subjection*. The word in the Greek is *ὑποταγή*, which signifies such a kind of *subjection* as is after an orderly manner, as of *Soldiers* in battel to their *Commander*; which being here denied to the *wisdom of the flesh*, does intimate thus much unto us, That *carnality* it is an *irregular* business, and such as is much out of order; from whence it comes not to be so obedient as it should be to the Law of God. Where there's nothing but confusion, there cannot be expected subjection, but every evil work. Those that are *disorderly*, they will be *lawless*; and those that are *lawless*, they will be *wicked*. Ungodly persons, they are in the Scripture-phrase exprest by sons of *Belial*; that is, such as are without a *yoke*. And 1 *Tim.* 1. 9, we find these two expressions join'd together, *ἀνόμιμος ὁ ἀπειθήνους*, Lawless and Disobedient; because the one follows upon the other. As *Psal.* 2. 23, *Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us*: The speech of wicked men against the Lord and his Christ.

This, it serves to give an account of so much wickedness as is at this time in the world; namely, Because there is so much carnal liberty, and licentiousness, and looseness of spirit. Certainly where there is no order, there will be no obedience; for *Obedience* it is an orderly subjection of one thing or person to another, as we may gather from the nature of the phrase and expression, which is here used about it.

And then further, to take it by way of *Qualification*; This shews that the obedience of carnal persons to the Law of God, whatsoever it is (as sometimes it is somewhat in appearance), yet it is not such as is worth any thing, because it is not orderly and regular, and to the Law of God considered as God's; but upon some other motives and considerations; some good things they may perhaps do, and stumble as it were upon them; but they are not *right* in the doing of them.

And so much of the *First Particular* here propounded to be considered by us; to wit, the simple pravity or disparagement of the carnal mind. *It is not subject to the Law of God.*

The Second is the *additional Amplification*, as it is not, so it cannot be neither; A carnal-minded person he cannot be subject to the Law of God. This is the Doctrine of the present Scripture; and it is so likewise of many others besides. Thus 1 Cor. 2. 14, *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* So 2 Cor. 3. 5, *Not that we are sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves, but our sufficiency is of God.* Joh. 3. 27, *A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from above.* And Job. 8. 43, *Why do ye not understand my speech; even because ye cannot hear my word.*

This is grounded upon those following Considerations: First, The *blindness* which by nature is in mans mind. He that cannot see, cannot practise, because he wants light to direct him. Now thus it is with a carnal person; He is one whose mind is blinded, as the Scripture represents him; and so his life must needs be answerable thereunto: *The light of the body is the eye; if therefore the light which is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!* As our Saviours himself reasons.

Secondly, The *Will*, that's likewise out of frame; That has a particular perverseness upon it; and is obstinate against that which is good. *The heart of man is evil from his youth,* Gen. 6. 5. And Gen. 8. 22. So Jer. 17. 9. *The heart is deceitful above all things, &c.*

Thirdly, The *Affections*; They are out of order to in all the kinds of them, Love and Hatred, and Fears and Grief, and Anger and Joy, &c. All out of course. Now forasmuch as there is no good principle by nature remaining in us, how can there be expected any good thing to come from us; Forasmuch as *an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit*, as our Saviour tells us, Mat. 7. 18.

To all these we may add some further Considerations besides: As First of all, *Custom* in sinning. This makes the *impotency* of doing good to be so much the more; and the *impossibility* to be so much the greater. *Custom*, it is as we use to express it a *second Nature*, which does carry a man with a great deal of force to those things which he is accustomed unto, so as he is not easily reclaimed from them. According to that of the Prophet *Jeremy*, in Jer. 13. 23, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, who are accustomed to do evil.* The carnal mind it cannot be subject to Gods Law from the Custom which is upon it.

Secondly, It cannot likewise from the just judgment of God himself towards it, whiles he gives up some persons above the rest to a *reprobate mind*, and to an *hard heart*, whereby sin is made in some manner, and in some sense, necessary to them. Thus John 12. 39, *Therefore they could not believe, because Esaias said, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, lest they should see with their eyes, and understand with their hearts, and be converted, and I should heal them.*

There are some kind of people in the world, that lye under that fearful judgment of being given up to their own sinful ways: so that *be that is unjust, shall be unjust still; and be that's filthy, shall be filthy still.* And for such as these, it is no wonder indeed that as they are not, so they cannot neither be subject to the Law of God.

But

But if they *cannot* (may some say), why then there is *no hurt done*. This seems to make for their *excuse*, and take from their *guilt*, because a man seems not to be bound to that which he *cannot perform*. *Nemo tenetur ad impossibile*.

To this we answer, That this does not excuse for all that; Because it is *impotentia contracta*; it is such an *impotency* and *inability* as man hath voluntarily brought upon himself. Look therefore as when a Debtor hath brought himself into poverty by his ill-husbandry, the Creditor may notwithstanding very justly require his debt of him, and put him upon the payment of it notwithstanding his present inability: so God, though man hath now lost by his own wilfulness and presumption, that power of keeping Gods Law which was once in *Adam*, bestowed upon him; yet may he justly require this Law to be fulfilled by him, and punish him for not fulfilling it.

Now further, what is here said of the *Law*, That the carnal mind cannot be subject to that; it is more especially true of the *Gospel*, and may be very well applied to that likewise. If the flesh be an enmity to the *former*, and the carnal mind has an impotency to that; it has to the *latter* the like repugnancy more especially. And the reason of it is this; Because there are no inclinations in our nature at all hereto, nor any notions or conceptions of it. As for the *Law*, that is written in mens hearts by Nature, and they have somewhat in them which does in some sort lead them thereunto. But for the *Gospel*, there is no such thing considerable about it; it is that which man by his understanding could never have thought of; and it is that which he hath no disposition in himself carrying him to the embracing of it.

The Use of all this to our selves comes to this: First, It meets with the Error of *Papists* and *Pelagians* in their Doctrine of *Free-will*; where they teach, That a man is able to love God, and to be subject to his Law by his own strength, without Graces; or that the Will hath power to refuse or to receive Grace as it list; for freedom of Will, they say, is but weakned and wounded, like the man that fell among thieves betwixt *Jericho* and *Jerusalem*; but it is not quite destroyed: As a Bird that is held by a string, hath power of it self to flye if ye loosen the string: Whereas indeed the Scripture here in this place puts an absolute impotency upon it; declaring, that a man in such a condition is neither subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.

This must still be understood, whiles he remains in that condition; the carnal mind as the carnal mind, and taken *reduplicative*; otherwise (as *Chrysostom* well observed) when the carnality of it is taken away, the mind in such a case is inabled; it hath a passive power of being made better, from whence it is made subject to Gods Law; but it hath not an *active* power in its present state and condition of Carnality, but is altogether unable. It hath *power* when it is changed by *Grace*; but not as it is by *Nature*; though in civil and natural things, yet not in things which are purely spiritual.

Therefore, Secondly, Let us from all which hath been said, labour to be more *spiritual our selves*, and to throw off this carnality from us. Not only those who are absolutely *unregenerate*, but even those also who are the *children of God*, who have the reliques of the flesh in them; they

they should mortifie it, and subdue it in themselves as much as they can, whereby they may be enabled to serve God with more *freedom* and *alacrity* of spirit. For this is most certain and out of question, That as wicked and ungodly men are wholly impotent to what is *spiritually good*, from that carnality which is *absolutely* in them; so *Gods children* also are in a *degree* impotent, from that carnality which is in them *in part*. And all the *difficulty* which they find in themselves, and whereof they so much complain as to duty, and the doing of good, it proceeds from hence, That they have more or less of *the flesh* in them. If they could but cast off *this carnal-mindedness*, they would find a great deal more expediteness in them to that which God requires of them, than they many times do. And so the Apostle Paul himself seems to give us an account of it, *Gal. 5. 17, The flesh lusts against the spirit, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* And speaking more particularly of himself, why *the good which he would do, he did not; and the evil which he would not do, that he did;* he gives this reason of it, namely, from *sin abiding in him; Because in him (that is in his flesh) there dwelt no good thing;* as we may see at large in the seventh of the *Romans*, and especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth Verses of it.

And so now I have done with these words in their simple and absolute consideration; *The carnal mind is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.*

Now further, Secondly, We may take them *Respectively* and *Argumentatively*, in the force of their connexion; *For it is not subject.* The Apostle Paul does from hence prove, That the *carnal mind* is an enemy to God, because it keeps not Gods Law. From whence we may observe thus much, That disobedience to God, is a conviction of enmity against him: Those that do not obey him, they do not love him; yea indeed they do plainly *bate him;* and so he esteems of them: *Those mine enemies that would not I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me, &c.* Luke 19. 14, 27.

The ground hereof is this; Because the *Law of God* is that which is most near and dear unto him. His Will is himself, and his Sovereignty is that which he most stands upon of any thing else. Now that is counted *enmity* to any person, which is an opposition of them in that which is nearest and dearest to them, and which they do most of all esteem. And so here in this particular as to *Disobedience* to Gods Commandments, it is a crossing of him in his chiefest *Desires*.

This (for the Application of it to our selves) First, Shews us the sad condition of all loose and licentious persons, and which do any way favour or indulge themselves in any sinful course whatsoever. They are such as in Gods account are enemies to him; and what that is, we have before declared unto you.

Yea, here's that which does meet vvith mens allowving of themselves in any secret exorbitancy and irregularity of spirit, vvho do not only break forth into gross and notorious outrages, but also do nourish inward and hidden lusts; They are so far forth enemies against God. And look vvhat evil there is in *such enmity*, even so great (consequently) is their *Misery*.

Secondly, Let us hereby also judg, and estimate and take account of our selves, and see how far we are *Gods Friends*, which is not so much by *pretences*, as by *obedience*. *Then are ye my friends* (says Christ himself to his Disciples), *when ye do whatsoever I command you*. Then, *emphatically*; and Then, *exclusively*. Ye are my Friends *then*; and ye are never my Friends indeed *but* then. Whenever ye do contrary to *this*, ye are not my *friends*, but rather my *enemies*; and so are all men else. And this we gather from the *connexion*, and the words in their respective consideration.

And so now I have done also with the second part of the Text, which is the proof or confirmation of the Doctrine and premised Proposition; and so with this whole seventh Verse: *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject, &c.*

SERMON

SERMON IX.

ROMANS 8. 8.

So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Carnal-mindedness, and a favour of the flesh, is a business which all men by Nature are so much carried and addicted unto; and so difficultly taken off from us, as that the Spirit of God in Scripture thinks he can never use Arguments and Reasons enough to persuade us against it. Here in this present Chapter, which we have still before us, we have divers couch't and summi'd up together. And the last which we spake to was taken from the enmity which it bears to God himself, and his most holy Law: It is enmity against God; and it is not subject to the Law of God, nor indeed can be. Now it follows, as a close of all; That those that are in the flesh, they cannot please God, in the words which I have now read unto you. These words are a Corollary deduced from the words which went before in the precedent Verse. There the Apostle had deliver'd this, That the carnal mind was enmity against God. And here now he infers this from it, That therefore those which are in the flesh, they cannot please him.

IN the Text it self there are two general parts considerable of us: First, The designation of the persons, or the Subject of the Proposition. Secondly, The discovery of the condition belonging to such persons, or the Prædicate. The designation of the persons, that's in these words, *They that are in the flesh*. The discovery of their condition, in these, *Cannot please God*.

We begin with the first of these parts, viz. The designation of the persons, *Those that are in the flesh*. Where our chief business will be, to shew what those persons are, and what is to be understood by us in this expression. Now for this we must know, that to be in the flesh, according to the language of Scripture, is taken two manner of ways, either in a good or indifferent sense, or in a bad and unwarrantable sense: First, To be so in a good or in an indifferent sense; And so to be in the flesh, is no more than to partake of human nature, and to lead a natural life here

in the world. Thus *Gal. 2. 20, The life which I now live in the flesh.* In the *flesh*, that is, in the *body*; being all one with that phrase which is used, *Heb. 13. 3.* And so *2 Cor. 10. 3, Though we walk in the flesh, yet we do not war after the flesh*; walk in the *flesh*, that is, converse after the manner of men, in a *natural* consideration. So again, speaking of Christ, there is mention made of the days of his *flesh*, *Heb. 5. 8.* To be in the *flesh* in this sense, hath nothing of *evil* in it, and so consequently is not *displeasing to God*; as being the *work of his own hands*; consider'd, as he is the *God of Nature*, and the *Maker and Creator of the World*. But secondly, There is also *being in the flesh* in a *bad and corrupt sense*, by taking *flesh* metonymically for *sin*, as it is oftentimes taken in Scripture. And so it is all one with that which we had before in the fifth verse of this Chapter, where there is mention made of such as are *after the flesh*.

Now to be in the *flesh* thus, it is an *Emphatical* expression, and so is to be taken by us. For men to be *in the flesh*, is not merely to have *flesh in them*, for so there is none but have here in this world more or less, even the best and holiest persons that are. But to be *in the flesh*, is to be *wholly possess'd* of the *flesh*; to be drench't and fous'd in *sin* over head and ears (as I may so express it), as a man that is in the water, he is *cover'd* and *overwhelm'd* with the water; even so it is here, *vitiis co-opertum*. So then 'tis *one thing* to have the *flesh* in us, and *another thing* for us to be in the *flesh*. To be *in the flesh*, is for the *flesh* to have power, and prevalency, and dominion over those who are in it. This is the meaning of such expressions of *Inherence*; as we may observe it in other phrases of the like nature, which are in use amongst us; As to be *in love*, to be *in drink*, to be in an *heat*, or *fury*, and the like; which words do not only denote the bare *inexistence*, but the *predominancy* of such affections in such persons in whom they are. And so is it likewise here in this particular; Thus *Simon Magus* is said to be *in the gall of bitterness*, and *in the bond of iniquity*, *Act. 8. 23.* Thus the whole world is said to *lie in wickedness*, *1 Job. 5. 19.* And the blind man, *born in sin*, *Job. 9. 34.* To be *in the flesh*, is to be wholly *carnal*, and *fleshly*, and *corrupt*; as to be in the *spirit*, is to be *gracious* and *holy*. And this briefly of the First general in the Text, to wit, the *Subject* of the Proposition in the Designation of the Persons here spoken of, and that is, *They that are in the flesh*.

The Second is the *Predicate*, in the Discovery of the *Condition* belonging to such persons, and that is, that *they cannot please God*; namely, whiles they so remain and continue. When it is said here, *That they that are in the flesh* (as we have explain'd it) in a *corrupt sense*; This again may be taken by us two manner of ways, Either as denoting the *state* or the *life*, The *condition* or the *conversation*. According to the *former* notion of it, so *they that are in the flesh cannot please God*; that is, those who are in the *state of nature*, and *unregeneracy*. According to the *latter* notion of it, so *they that are in the flesh cannot please God*, that is, those who *walk after the flesh*, which is a fruit and effect of the *former*; but yet does add somewhat more unto it, as being indeed a step as 'twere beyond it.

First,

First, Take it in the first sense, *They that are in the flesh cannot please God*, that is, such persons as are yet remaining in a state of *nature* and *unregeneracy*; These are loathsome and displeasing to God. For the better opening of this present Point, it is requisite that I should declare unto you, what it is to be *unregenerate*, or in the *state of Nature*; Because that all do not presently understand or apprehend what *this means*. Now for this we must know thus much, That God having made men at first *male* and *female* (*Adam* and *Eve*), did enter into *Covenant with him* for himself, and his whole *Posterity*, to give him *eternal happiness* upon condition of his *perfect obedience* to his *Divine Law*, which he gave him also power and ability to perform; and accordingly made trial of him in one particular business amongst the rest, which was to abstain from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, as we have it in the second of *Genesis*. Now *man* being tempted by the *Devil*, did notwithstanding break this *Law*, and thereby brought both himself, and all that came after him (in whose room he then stood as a *Representative* and *Publick Person*, and common Root of all Mankind), into a state and condition of sin and eternal misery, forfeiting that Holiness and Happiness wherein he was at first created; and in which, if he had not thus transgressed, he had been certainly still continued, so that what was done by *him* at that time in his own *immediate Person*, is accounted and reckoned to be done by all his *posterity*, as being included in his loins. And every person that is now born into the world, whether *man* or *woman*, is upon this account become defiled with sin, and consequently a child of wrath; both as guilty of that first sin which was committed by *Adam* himself in his person, in eating of the forbidden fruit; as also from thence contracting a general and universal defilement of his whole nature, whereby he is not only deprived of that righteousness which he once had, and still ought to have in him; but is also inclined, and disposed, and carried to all manner of evil, and that continually, as we have it expressed unto us in *Gen. 6. 5*, and *Psal. 51. 5*, *I was born in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*.

But now this first *Covenant* which was made with man, being broken by him, God hath made with him a new *Covenant* in *Christ*, which is the *Second Person in Trinity*, taking humane nature upon him, and therein satisfying the Justice of God in man's behalf, both by his *active* and *passive obedience*: That whosoever shall believe in him, he shall have eternal life; that is, whosoever will accept of him upon his own terms and conditions, both as a Saviour alone to redeem him, and as a Lord alone to rule him, he shall be eternally saved by him; That he will both apply his *Blood* unto him for the freeing him from the guilt of sin; and bestow also his *Spirit* upon him for the freeing him from the power of sin, and for the changing, and altering, and renewing of the whole frame of his soul in him, putting new principles, and dispositions, and inclinations into him, both as to the hatred and abhorrence of evil, and the following and desiring of good. And so instead of that corrupt nature which he derived at first from *Adam*, with whom he was united by *Creation*, to confer upon him a new and *sanctified nature* in *Christ*, with whom he is made one by *Grace*.

So then, to be in a *state of nature* and *unregeneracy*, is no more but
N 3 this:

this: To remain in that sinful and wretched condition which we were in by *Adams fall*, and with which we at first came into the world without any change or alteration wrought in us at all of it; our Understandings wholly darkned, our Wills wholly perverted, our Affections wholly disordered, our whole Man in the latitude of it wholly distempered and corrupted, without any contrary Principles of Grace and Goodness infused into us, and carrying us to better things, as to *repent*, to *believe*, to *love* God, and to yield obedience to him, and such as these; When we have not closed with Christ upon the conditions and terms of the Gospel, so that by him we might be reconciled unto God, being by faith incorporated into him, and mystically made *one with him*: This (I say) is to be in the state of nature; and this is in the sense of the Text, *to be in the flesh*.

Now it remains that we should shew what is here declared of such persons, that they *cannot please God*; as indeed they cannot *please him*, nay they cannot but *displease* him, as being very odious and abominable to him. This is the Point which we have now before us. And it may be made good unto us according to a *two-fold explication*. First, In reference to their *Persons*; They do not, nor cannot please him in them. And secondly, In reference to their *Actions*; They do not, nor cannot please him in them neither.

First, Take it for their *Persons*; They are displeasing to him in reference to them. Psal. 54. 5, *Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight; thou hatest all the workers of iniquity.* Psal. 7. 11, *God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.* Hab. 1. 13, *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity*; that is, with any allowance or approbation of it. There is no leprous or contagious person that is more displeasing in the eyes of man, than a carnal and unregenerate person is displeasing in the eyes of God; He is very noysom and irksom unto him, as any thing can be. The ground of this displeasingness may be thus far accounted to us: First, Because they are *out of Christ*, who is the *Primarily-beloved*. Eph. 1. 6, it is said, *he hath made us accepted in his beloved*. Now this Beloved is *Christ*, Mat. 3. 17, *This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased*. In Him as the *termination* of his well-pleasing; and in Him also as the *conveyance*. In him for himself, and in all others for his sake. All men are so far well-pleasing to God, as they are *in Christ*, who is the *first-pleasing Person*; and those who are not so, are not pleasing to him. God first of all loves him, and then he loves all his children so far forth as they are members of him; and those who are not so, he hath little love or affection for them. Though he may love them with a common and general love, as he does his Creatures (God in that sense hates nothing 'which he hath made'); yet he does not love them with a special and peculiar love, as his *Favourites*; so he loves them no further than as he looks upon them as one with Christ, and have his stamp and image upon them. He loves men with a love of *good-will*, so far forth as they are *elected*, upon the account of his own good pleasure, and as he does in time intend to bestow the *inheritance* upon them. But he loves men with a love of *complacency* and *delight*, only as they are *effectually called*, and are already actual.

actual partakers of saving-grace wrought in them, and as they are by faith united to *Christ*, and made one with him.

Now because those who are carnal persons, and in the state of Nature, they are none of these, They are not incorporated into Christ, nor by faith made *members of him*, therefore they cannot be well-pleasing to God in such a condition. They are in themselves and in their own nature unlovely; and they are not interested in him, who alone can put loveliness upon them. This is so far considerable of us as the main scope and drift of the present Scripture which we have now before us. For in the first verse of this Chapter, it is said, That *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*, making the stress of all to lye in this, to wit, our ingrafting into Christ, and union with him; which those that are *in the flesh*, have no share or interest in at all.

Secondly, *Unregenerate person* cannot please God, because they want *Faith*. That's a sure Rule of the Apostle's, which is laid for a ground and foundation, That *without faith it is impossible to please God*, Heb. 11. 14. Now such as are in the *flesh*, in the sense explain'd, they have not *Faith*, and therefore cannot be pleasing to him upon that consideration.

Thirdly, They are altogether *unlike* God, and so cannot be pleasing to him, in that respect likewise. We know that *liking* is founded in *likeness*, and *complacency* in *correspondency*. Such persons as have no *suitableness* or *agreeableness* one to another, they cannot be *pleasing* to one another. Now this is the case and condition of *carnal persons* in respect of God; They have no *likeness* to him at all, no resemblance or image of his stamp upon them; but are wholly opposite and contrary to him; For *what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? or what communion hath light with darkness? or what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols?* as it is 2 Cor. 6. 14. Such as these, they have the Image of Satan upon them, and are like unto him; But for God, no such thing.

Fourthly, We need go no further for the proof of this point unto us, than the very Text it self, if we look upon it in the coherence of it, and how these carnal persons are therein described and set forth unto us; As by such as are *after the flesh*, as do *mind the things of the flesh*; are in a state of *death*, in a state of *enmity*, in a state of *impotency* and *inability of subjection to the Law of God*. All which are declared of them in the passages foregoing; and how is it then possible, that such as these should be *pleasing to God*. And thus have we seen the point according to the first notion of it, They cannot please God in reference to their persons.

The Second is in reference to their *actions*. They cannot please him so neither. And this it first of all follows upon the former, and is a result of it, therefore it is, that carnal men cannot please God in their *actions*, Because they do not please him in their persons. Where the Person is at any time under prejudice, or out of favour, there is nothing which is done by him, that can be accepted or taken well from him. Now thus it is here. This we may see (for an instance) in the example of *Abel and Cain*, Gen. 4. 4, 5. where it is said, That *the Lord*
bad

had respect unto Abel, and to his offering; but to Cain, and to his offering he had not respect; where we may observe, the *method* and order which the *Holy Ghost* there propounds unto us.

First, Respect to *Abel* himself, and then respect to his offering. First, No respect to *Cain* himself, and then his offering had no respect neither. In each of which we see how the *person* had an influence upon the *performance*, as to the acceptance and approbation of it; and so it is with any other besides.

But Secondly, The *Actions* of carnal men are unpleasing and unacceptable to God considered in *themselves*, because they proceed not from a *right principle* in them, nor are directed to a *right end* by them. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord; how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind? says *Solomon*, Prov. 21. 27. For an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit, Mat. 7. 18.

Against this may haply be objected, That God hath sometimes approved of the *Actions* of *unregenerate persons*, and accordingly rewarded them for them, as *Abab's Humiliation*, *Jehu's Zeal*, *Nebuchadnezzar's Service* against *Egypt*, &c. therefore it is not so clear that they are unpleasing to him.

To this we answer, That God has indeed approved of these *Actions* for the matter and substance of them, considered at large, & in *abstraction*; but yet he has not approved of them as the *Actions* of such and such persons, considered precisely & in *concreto*, as coming from them, and according to the *circumstances* of them; and so likewise answerably he has rewarded them out of the largeness and fulness of his *Bounty*, with outward and temporal blessings, as one that will be a debtor to no man; but he has not rewarded them with *Heaven* and *Eternal life*, which is the great Reward of all, and the best testimony of his acceptance. Thus we see in both references, whether to the *persons*, or else to the *performances*; whether in a *passive* sense, or in an *active*; they that are in the *flesh*, that is to say, in an *unregenerate* condition, they cannot please God; they cannot of themselves be acceptable to him; nor they cannot do any thing which may gain acceptance with him.

Now this for the further opening and amplifying of it still to us, must be taken indefinitely by us, and in the greatest latitude and extent that can be: Those that are in the *state of Nature*, let them be in whatsoever *state* they can be besides, they are but loathsome and abominable to God while they so remain. Wee'l consider it in some few particulars, which the World is apt for the most part so much to admire and cry up.

First, Greatness of Birth and Worldly Parentage: It is not that which will exempt from this disparagement: Though this hath a respect which is due to it from men, and upon civil considerations; yet it does no way take with God, except there be somewhat else with it. If a man be not new-born as well as high-born; born from above, in a spiritual sense, as well as born from above in a natural, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. Those which are noble after the flesh, and yet if they remain in the flesh, they cannot please God. The work of Regeneration, and the new creature, is not only a business which does concern meaner persons, and such as are of an inferior descent, but even the greatest and highest that are. If ever they will come to Heaven, and be made

made partakers of that blessed condition vvhich belongs to another life, even they also must come out of that state of Nature vvherein they vvere born, as vvell as others. There's no other birth besides, though in the world never so honourable, which will countervail this *new birth* whereof we now speak, or will dispence with any man from being interested and concern'd in it.

Secondly, *Greatness of Estate and worldly Wealth*; It is not that which will serve the turn neither. Riches, and Wealth, and great Estates, they are such things as please men, and sometimes gain acceptance with them; *Men will praise thee, when thou dost well to thy self, Psal. 49. 18.* But if they be not sanctified by Grace, and accompanied with a new Nature, in such persons as are partakers of them, there is but little comfort in them or advantage by them. *Riches avail not in the day of wrath; but righteousness delivers from death, Prov. 11. 4.* *Those that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of them can redeem his Brother, or give to God a ransom for him; For the redemption of their souls is precious, it ceaseth for ever, says the Psalmist, Psal. 49. 6.* Those who have much of the world, if they be also still in the flesh, they cannot please God. It is not Wealth which will satisfie for Graces, in Gods estimation.

Thirdly, *Greatness of Parts and worldly Wit*; It is not that which will satisfie neither. Though this be also the Gift of God, and excellent in its kind; Yet it is not available as to acceptance with God in a carnal and *unregenerate* heart. There's no man shall be saved for his parts, if he hath not graces to sanctifie those parts, and to give him a right improvement of them. Nay, where there are Parts without Grace, they are so far from promoting of salvation, as that they do rather obstruct it, and set men further off from it, as having from hence so much the greater occasion for the doing of more mischief; and so of aggravating the condemnation of those persons who are the subjects and partakers of them.

Fourthly, *Sweetness of Nature, and Ingenuity, and moral Accomplishments.* These are also very commendable in themselves, and such as do make men very acceptable in their converse one with another; But yet they are not sufficient alone to make men acceptable in the eyes of God. Whosoever are still in the flesh, and not changed and renewed by Grace, they will be but short of Heaven and Salvation for all these. We know how it was with the Apostle Paul himself before his Conversion in this respect; How he had as much to boast of as any man else; but yet when he came to be converted, he renounced all confidence in this particular; And *what things were gain unto him, those he counted loss for Christ, Phil. 3. 7, &c.*

Lastly, *The Name of Religion*; The bare outward profession of it, and the performance of many duties in it. It is not this neither which is sufficient; For all this may very well be even in a false and corrupt heart; And so God have no pleasure in those in whom they are found and observ'd notwithstanding. *Cain he offer'd sacrifice; Jehu he was zealous against Idolaters; Herod he heard John the Baptist, and did many things gladly; The Church of Sardis had a Name as if she lived, but was dead; And so we might instance, in many more besides, in com-*

mon experience. This *state of Nature*, it is not acceptable or well-pleasing to God in the best outward and worldly Qualifications that are considerable of us; whether of birth, or of wealth, or of wit, or of good nature, or of morality, or of the Name of Religion, or any thing of this nature.

Now the Consideration of this point may be thus far useful to us: First, From hence to teach us all to take heed of resting in such a *state and condition* as this is. We have heard what it is to be in a meer *natural and unregenerate condition*; Now let us therefore beware of satisfying our selves in such a condition, as wherein we cannot please God, whiles we are in it; as is here signified to us. It is that which a great many do; And is the very *ruin and undoing* of them. This is the *fundamental error*, and that which is the cause and ground-work of all other miscarriages besides, in that people for the most part do not mind or look after this; And therefore we had need to give the greater heed and attention to this present Doctrine; And that so much the rather, as there are so many Doctrines abroad in the world which are opposite and contrary hereunto; either *denying*, or at the best but *lessening* of the *corruption of Nature*; crying up the *power of it*, and maintaining the *sufficiency* which is in it, and wholly taking men off from *searching* into the *wretchedness* of it.

This is that which now lies upon us, to be perswaded of that which the Holy Ghost does here exhibit unto us, That those who are in this condition, they are no way acceptable to God; neither will one day be owned by *him*, but rejected, and cast out of his presence. And so accordingly it is that which should be chiefly lamented by our selves. This is the *first step in Conversion*, to be made sensible and apprehensive of this, and to be humbled under it; To see the vileness and sinfulness of our *nature*, and the misery which we are subject unto from it. Without which it is altogether impossible or improbable for us, that we should ever close with Christ or accept of those conditions which in the Gospel he tenders to us.

Men are sensible sometimes of their *actual* sins; and have cause so to be; Of their Murthers, and Adulteries, and Drunkenness, and Thefts, and such courses as these, which now and then do a little *astonish* them, and work some kind of *horror* in them. But what may they then think of the sin of their *Nature*, which is the *occasion* of all these to them? If the *fruit* be so bitter, what is the *root* from whence it comes? If the *streams* be so polluted, what is the *fountain* that sends them forth. We count in every thing else, the generality of the condition to be of greater consequence than any particular emergence, because it is of greater influence. For a man to be of a *sickly constitution* is more than to have a particular distemper or fit of sickness upon him. For a man to be of a *weak estate*, is more than to have a *particular loss* or damage happening unto him. And so it is here in this particular; For a man to be in his *corrupt nature*, to be in a *state and condition* of sin, it is more (if we could abstract it from it) than to be guilty of *some one sin only in particular*, though in it self never so great; Because it is eminently and in effect all other sins besides, as the *root*, and *seed*, and *spring*, and *original* of them.

For this purpose, and to aggravate this so much the more unto us,

con-

consider these things further : First, That this *corrupt nature*, where it remains unchanged in any person, it does expose him to all kind of sin, consider'd at large, of what nature or kind soever. There's no sin which a man is *secure* of, who is still remaining in his *unregenerate condition*; but he is not only *capable* of it, but *inclinable* to it, and in great danger of being surprized with it. It is true indeed, that all such kind of persons, they do not always actually fall into such sins, but are sometimes kept from them by the power of Gods *restraining grace*; But yet they are *fair for them*, and have no principle in themselves to prevent them in *them*. This is a very sad condition, if it be duly consider'd; for a man to think thus with himself, that there is no sin, though never so vile, that he has a fence or safeguard from, but may presently and immediately fall into it, though he seems never so much to detest it, and to abominate it, and to speak against it. Why now this I say is the case of a *carnal person*; He that's yet in his natural estate, he is exposed to any sin whatsoever, even the unpardonable sin it self. And this the *Spirit of God* in Scripture makes to be the difference of such a person and one that is regenerate, 1 *Joh. 3. 6, Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not.* And v. 9, *Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; neither can he sin, because he is born of God.* Not that he is absolutely exempted from all acts of humane infirmity; but from the power, and dominion, and prevalency of sin in him, and thralldom and subjection to it, and perseverance and continuance in it, which he is preserved from by a contrary principle of Grace, and the new Creature in him, as carrying him opposite and contrary thereunto. So again, 1 *Joh. 5. 18,* having before spoken of the *sin unto death*, he presently adds, *We know, that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not;* namely, such a sin as this is; *but he that is begotten of God, keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.*

Secondly, Where men are yet in the flesh, and unchanged in their nature, they are exposed to the return of sin again, after some temporary forbearance of it, and abstinence from it. There is nothing which is a Principle of *Mortification*, but only *sanctifying* and *saving-grace*. There must be a change of the *heart*, before there can be a change of the course, and a change of the life. And this may serve to give us an account of the miscarriage of many people in this particular : Ye shall have some kind of persons sometimes in the world, who when Conscience is a little stirr'd in them occasionally from some danger which is near unto them, or some affliction which lyes upon them, or some qualm which may come over their hearts, may perhaps now and then for a while resolve against such and such sins, and for the present abstain from them; their Luxury, their Intemperance, their Gaming, their evil company, their Uncleaness, their mispending of time, and the like; who yet notwithstanding again after a while do return unto them, and more vehemently than ever before. Here's the true reason of it, Because they are as yet in their unregenerate condition, and their nature is not changed in them.

Thirdly, This *state of Nature* it does make men to *commit sin* with more *delight* and *eagerness* of *prosecution*; as it is said there in the Apostle *John*, Not only to *sin*, but to make a *trade* of sin, and to *give up*

themselves as it were to the committing of it, as it is said of the Gentiles, *Eph. 4. 19, who being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to commit all wickedness with greediness.* Thus we see this corrupt nature, and the state and condition of it, what a vile and grievous thing it is; as a ground to persuade men to lament it, and to bewail it, and to mourn under it.

Yea, and in all particular and occasional relentings and humiliations for sin, have an eye and regard still to this; as we have an instance in the Prophet *David*, who when he was troubled for his actual transgressions, his Adultery, and Murther, and the like; he presently thought of the sin of his nature, as the occasion of the rest in him: And if it was so with him who was brought out of the state of Nature, and had only the reliques of it remaining in him; how does it concern such to be affected, in whom it remains in its full vigor and force? Those that are in their *natural condition*, they are in a *sad and miserable condition*.

And they are so especially upon this account which is here exprest in the Text, Because *they cannot please God*; which carries a great deal more in it than we are presently sensible of, or do easily apprehend. This phrase is that which the *Rhetoricians* call a *plousion*, wherein there is less exprest than intended. They *do not or cannot please God*; that is indeed, they do exceedingly displease him, and can be no other than odious and abominable to him. Thus *1 Cor. 10. 5*, speaking of the *unbelieving Israelites*, it is said, *That with many of them God was not well-pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness*: He was not well-pleased with them, that is, he was deeply offended with them, and highly displeased against them. And so now also here in the Text, it expresses the greatest *indignation* which God has towards a *carnal condition*, and such persons as are abiding still in it; their case is very terrible and dangerous.

Thus it is, and will appear to be so according to sundry explications: First, As it is an obstruction to prayer, and the receiving of *that*. *We know that God hears not sinners*, said the blind man in the Gospel, *John 9. 31.* And *he that regards iniquity in his heart, the Lord will not hear his prayer*, *Psal. 66. 18.* No man can expect any further the granting of his petition, than according to the acceptance of his person. Where the person pleases not, the prayer prevails not. *Your iniquities have separated betwixt you and your God; and your sins have caused him to hide his face from you, that he will not hear you, Isa. 59. 2.* Now let any one consider what a grievous thing this indeed is, for God not to hear a mans prayer, *1 Job. 3. 22.*

Secondly, It deprives men of Blessings and the comfortable Influences of Gods Providence. Where God is not pleased with any man, he will not bestow any good thing upon him, at least which shall be good to him, and making for his advantage. But though he may sometimes in appearance heap many good things upon him; yet he shall be never the better for them; God will curse his very blessings, and turn his comforts into the greatest crosses unto him; As we see it was with the *Israelites*, when God was offended and displeased with them, he gave them *Quails* and *Manna* in wrath; so that *whiles the meat was between their teeth, ere it was yet chewed, the anger of God fell upon them, and smote divers of them.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It exposes to temptations and the assaults of the spiritual Enemy. *Whoso pleaseth God shall be kept from many snares*; but he that does not so, he shall be given up to them. As *David*, when he was but for a time under Gods displeasure, God suffered him to be tempted by *Satan*; as when he was displeased also with the *Israelites*, he did for that reason suffer him to number the people; both at once they suffered from *Satan* occasionally from Gods displeasure.

Lastly, It excludes from Heaven and Eternal happiness and Salvation at last. Those whom God is not pleased withal, he will not know them at another day, when it will most of all concern them that he should know them, and be pleased with them. They that cannot please God, they cannot be saved by him; which is the misery of all such persons who live and dye in a natural estate. Now this (I say) ought to affect men, and cause them to lay it much to heart. To think, that whiles it is thus with them as we have now declared; that is, whiles they are yet in the flesh in a corrupt sense, they are displeasing to God, which is the worst character that can be put upon them, and the greatest evil (in the extent of it) that can possibly befall them. It is made the brand of the *Jews*, That they pleased not God, as they were contrary to all men, 1 *Thef.* 2. 15. And on the other side, it is the note of good Christians to be acceptable to God, and approved of men, *Rom.* 14. 18.

We see how careful men are for the most part to please themselves, and to please men; and shy and afraid of displeasing them, such as they may be, men of Power, and Authority, and Interest, which can do any great things for them, how loath they are to offend them; and how much more does it then concern them to be shy of displeasing God, who will one day judg them, and is able to destroy them, and for ever to condemn them? *We labour* (says the Apostle Paul) *to be accepted of him*; why? *because we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 9, 10. And that's the first Use of this Point, as it serves to convince us of the miserableness of a natural condition, and teaches such as are in it to lament and bewail themselves for it.

Secondly, We may from hence learn what to think of such persons as are out of the pale of the Church, and have never heard of Christ or the Gospel, and the Means of eternal salvation, as Pagans, and Heathens, and Infidels, and such as these. There are some kind of persons now and then which would seem to be very charitable towards them, by putting them into an hopeful condition in this respect, as conceiving, that by the Light of Nature, and the improvement of their natural Abilities, they might come to Heaven, and be made partakers of eternal life. But we have no warrant to conclude so from this Text which we have now before us; where we are told, that *they that are in the flesh cannot please God*; and so must all such persons needs be which are in such circumstances as these are. Those that sit in darkness, they sit also in the shadow of death, as the Scripture joins these two both together; as it does also these four, *without Christ, strangers to the promises, having no hope, and without God in the world* *Eph.* 2. 12.

Thirdly, Here's an Advertisment to all such persons as are in their natural condition, to labour by all means possible, and as soon as may be,

to come out of this condition; by considering of the vileness which is in it, the danger which it does expose them unto; and attending upon all good means which God has sanctified and ordained to this purpose, as diligent hearing of the word, reading of the Scriptures, prayer, and communion of Saints, which are the *walks* and *paths* of the Spirit, and the means whereby he does usually convey himself into the hearts of those whom he hath chosen, and does *effectually call them to himself*. And thus have we seen how *they that are in the flesh cannot please God*, by taking this being in the flesh, for a note of mens state and condition, as *unregenerate*.

Now secondly, it may be also taken as a note of mens life and conversation. *They that are in the flesh*, that is, *they that walk after the flesh*; which is not absolutely different from the former, but a *fruit* and *effect* of it, and additional to it. Those that *give themselves up to the flesh, make provision for the lusts of it, to fulfil it*; and do persist, and continue, and go on in a *carnal course*, and who live in any *known sin*, and more particularly in such sins as are call'd emphatically the *sins of the flesh*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. & 2 Pet. 2. 10. These are eminently in the flesh also; and whiles they are so, are offensive to God. They cannot please him whiles they carry it in this manner towards him. This for the further sense of these words which we may fasten upon them. *Syricius*, one of the *Popes of Rome*, in his time was such an enemy to the Ordinances of God, and so far transported by a Spirit of giddiness and frensie, as that he expounded this passage of the Apostle of being *in the flesh*, of the state of *Matrimony*; *They that are in the flesh*, that is, says he, *they that are married*; which is an interpretation so fond and ridiculous, as that it is hardly worth the naming or mentioning to you, but only hereby to shew the foolery of such kind of Glossers as those are amongst them, and the infallibility of the *man of sin*, for the interpretation of Scripture, which they do so much cry up, and pretend to.

As for us, we know no such sense as this. This passage here before us, it is not a reflection upon marriage; but it is a brand upon lust. It is not a disparagement of *Gods Ordinance*, but it is a censure of *mans Corruption*. Those that live in the *lusts of the flesh*, in fornication, and adultery, and uncleanness, and such things as these, These are *in the flesh* with a witness, and to be sure are therefore such as *do not*, no *cannot please God*, who is of pure and holy eyes.

And therefore let all men upon that account take heed of such courses, as of living in any known sin and wickedness, whatsoever it be, as that which comes under this head which is here exhibited to us; and hath consequently this evil which is here mentioned attending upon it.

And further take in this with it, to make it so much the more considerable, That such ways and courses as these, they do not only *not please God*, but they do likewise moreover please *Satan*, who is our worst and greatest enemy; And therefore what a madness is it for us to yeild or to give way unto them; To gratifie the *worst enemy* with the displeasure of the *best friend*. And thus much of these words as they lye here before us in the Text.

Now further (and so to conclude) they may be here consider'd of us in their implied *Antithesis* and *Opposition*, which though the Apostle does

does not expresse, as he did in the foregoing verses, yet certainly he does intend and suppose it, as we may gather from the *like reason* for it; And that's this, That those *who are in the Spirit* (that is, regenerate, and born again, and renewed by grace) *they do please God*; for so they do. Thus it is said of *Enoch*, he had this testimony, that *he pleased God*, Heb. 11. 5. Thus it is said of *Noah*, that *he found Grace in the eyes of the Lord*, Gen. 6. 8. Thus it is said of *Daniel*, that *he was greatly beloved*, or a *man of desires*, *Ish Chamonchim*, Dan. 9. 23, &c. This is the priviledg and happiness of all which are spiritual persons.

First, Because *they walk with God*, as *Enoch* did. *They walk after the Spirit*.

Secondly, They are *members of Christ*, who is the *Son of Gods love*, Col. 1. 13.

Thirdly, They *resemble God*, and have his Image stamp't upon them, and renewed in them.

The consideration of this point is a great comfort and encouragement to them. What though they may not haply *please men*, who sometimes may be *hard to please*, from these humours and corruptions which are in them; yet so long as they can please God, that may be enough and sufficient for them, in displeasing of all others besides.

And therefore let such be still perswaded to endeavour to please him yet further; *To walk worthy of the Lord to all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledg of God*, Col. 1. 10:

And furthermore we beseech you, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how you ought to walk, and to please God, so ye would abound more and more, as the same Apostle speaks, 1 Thes. 4. 1.

SERMON

SERMON X.

ROMANS 8. 9.

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be the spirit of God dwelleth in you.

The life of Doctrine it consists in Application, and the bringing home of general Truths to particular persons. Therefore the Apostle Paul having in the foregoing Verses of this Chapter, laid down a Description both of carnal and spiritual-mindedness considered in general, as we have formerly declared unto you; he does here in this ninth Verse which we have now before us, and the former branch of it, draw it down to the Use and Improvement of the particular Romans to whom he here writes; shewing how far it did pertain and belong unto them, and they concerned in it. And that was, First, By removing from them the one, to wit, carnal-mindedness; But ye are not in the flesh. And Secondly, By attributing and appropriating to them the other, to wit, spiritual-mindedness; but ye are in the spirit. And both of these illustrated and confirmed from a convincing-Consideration; If so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.

IN the Text it self there are Two General Parts considerable; First, The Sentence or Judgment declared. Secondly, The Ground or Argument for the proof or confirmation of this Sentence. The Sentence or Judgment it self, that we have in these words, *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit.* The Proof or Confirmation of it in these, *If so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.*

We begin in order with the First of these Parts, viz. The Sentence it self declared, *But ye are not, &c.* Which is again considerable of us two manner of ways: First of all simply and absolutely as it lies in it self: Secondly, Reflexively, as coming from the Apostle Paul, and applied to these Romans.

First, Take it simply in it self, *Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit;* where we have signified to us the state and condition of the children of God,

God, and the opinion which Saint Paul has of them; and that is, not to be carnal, but spiritual. The Apostle does not say, *Flesh is not in you*; but, *You are not in the flesh*: which two are very different and distinct one from the other. Then is the flesh said to be in us, when we have in us the remainders of corruption, and the old man, which even the best of the Servants of God have here in this present life. But then are we said to be in the flesh, when we are wholly possess'd of the flesh, and are absolutely led and carried away by it; this Gods children are not; they are not in the flesh, but in the spirit. That is, they are not wholly sway'd by their own corruption, but by the Spirit of God in them.

This is so far considerable of us, as it teaches how to judg both of our selves and other men. First, *For our selves*: It is a Point which may be very well improved by the children of God under temptation, when as Satan joining with their own misgiving hearts, would go about to persuade them, that they have no Grace at all in them, because they have it in them mingled with some corruption. They should not hearken or give heed to such suggestions as these are. As long as they mourn under sin, strive against it, labour to overcome it, and are really careful what they can to please God, and to approve themselves to him; they may here know for their comfort, That their state and condition is good, and such as they may be satisfied in; it is so look'd upon by God, and it hath cause to be so look'd upon by themselves; who as they should have one eye upon their sin to humble them; so they should have another eye upon their Graces also to cheer them, and comfort them, and keep them up.

Again Secondly, This also teaches us how we should look upon other men who are the Saints and Servants of God, in the midst of those weakneses and infirmities which they are sometimes compass'd withal. There are many malicious persons in the world, who if at any time they do by chance espy any thing which is amiss in Gods children, they can commonly see nothing else. If they see some flesh in them, they can see nothing of the spirit; and they are apt both to account of them, and to call them according to that which is worst in them. Now such as these are here to be instructed from the contrary verdict of the Spirit of God here in the Text, who whiles he speaks of those who are Gods children, he pronounces this concerning them, that they are not in the flesh, but in the spirit; acknowledging the goodness of their condition considered in general, notwithstanding their failings in particular. And so much may suffice of this passage considered simply and absolutely in it self.

Now Secondly, We may also look upon it Reflexively, as coming from the Apostle. He gives this testimony of these believing Romans to whom he wrote, for their particular, That they were spiritual. And here two things more:

First, His knowledg of their state and condition in Grace, for the thing it self.

Secondly, His discovery of this knowledg in reference to them.

First, Here's his knowledg it self: Whiles he sees it, he does intimate that he knows it, and discerns it, and takes notice of it, to be so indeed

with them, That they were such as were in the state of Grace.

Now here it may be demanded, How he came to do so? How could Saint Paul know that these Romans were not in the flesh?

To this we answer: Divers manner of ways. First, By the judgment of *Charity*, he did conceive thus hopefully of them; they were such as made an honourable profession, and they had a good report in every place: *Their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world*, as it is declared of them, *Rom. 1. 8.* and they had done nothing contrary hereunto; and so there was no cause to suspect them: *Charity hopeth all things.*

Secondly, By a *special spirit of discerning* which was vouchsafed unto him. This was that wherein the Apostles and such extraordinary Ministers as those were, did in a special manner excel. They did by the immediate revelation of the Spirit of God, know the state and condition of such persons in the *Church of God*, in order either to their *salvation*, or the *contrary* of it. Thus Peter, he knew the falseness and hypocrisy of *Simon Magus*, *Act. 8. 23.* *I perceive* (saith he) *that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity*: that is, that thou art a rotten, and corrupt, and unfavoury person, in the midst of all thy outward profession and pretences to Religion. And so again on the other side, Paul knew the sincerity of *Timothy*, and his *Mother* and *Grandmother* before him; *2 Tim. 1. 5.* *When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith which dwelt first in thy Grandmother Lois, and in thy Mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also, &c.* And so likewise for the *Thessalonians*, *1 Thes. 1. 4.* *Knowing brethren, beloved, your election of God.* Thus have such extraordinary persons as Prophets and Apostles, and the like, had a special ability of discerning communicated unto them from an extraordinary priviledg and favour vouchsafed unto them; but yet even also ordinary persons, both Ministers and other Christians still in these days, have a common and ordinary ability to this purpose bestowed upon them, whereby from converse, and observation, and special experience both of persons and things, they are able to say very much now and then to the state and condition of those whom they converse withal, and to give shrew'd conjectures concerning them.

Thirdly, It may be answered, That when the Apostle Paul declares this at present concerning the Romans, *Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit*; he speaks not here to the Romans at large, but only to the *Believers* amongst them; *To all that be at Rome, beloved of God, and Saints*, as it is *Rom. 1. 7*; and so it was true of them what he did here fasten upon them. And this for his *knowledg it self*; he knew that it was thus indeed with them.

Now farther, Secondly, He signifies this his knowledg and apprehension of them. Why does he so? For two reasons, as we may conceive, more especially. First, To testify the good opinion which himself had of them. Secondly, So much the more to encourage them to proceed and go on in goodness.

First, I say, Hereby to testify the *good opinion* which himself had of them. He had in the Verse before declared the sad estate of carnal persons: Now lest they should think that he had mention'd this in reference

ence to them, as thinking themselves to be such for their own particulars; therefore he now adds this unto it by way of exception: as who should say, I do not speak this as reflecting any thing upon your selves, whom I have a better opinion of, than as to be thus carnally-minded; *But ye are not*, &c. Thus we shall find it elsewhere to the *Hebrews*, chap. 6. ver. 9, when he had in the Verses before laid down the fearful condition of *Apostates* and *Back-sliders* from the Truth, he presently adds, *But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak*. He would have those believers to whom he wrote, to think that he was well persuaded of them. And so it is requisite likewise for all other people to do, where there is ground and occasion for it: To think that their Teachers have *favourable apprehensions* of them, and affections towards them; and that upon this consideration, Because from hence they will probably better take the Counsels, Exhortations, and Admonitions, which do at any time come from them, as being dispenc'd to them in *love*. Whereas on the other side, whiles it is otherwise, they will be apt sometimes to except against them, and to quarrel with them, as the *Galatians* did once with *Paul*, whom they counted *their Enemy* because he told them the truth, Gal. 4. 16, which proceeded from hence, Because they thought him not to be so well conceited of them, or affected towards them, as indeed he was. And that's one ground of the Apostle's expression here unto them, to testify his good opinion of them.

Secondly, For their further encouragement and progress in goodness. It is a good spur, and incentive, and motive to any to be better, when they are commended for what already they *are*, especially when it comes from those who are superiors to them, and stand in such relations as *St. Paul* did here to these *Romans*. The testimony of so eminent an Apostle was a very great encouragement.

This by the way is a very good direction to Parents, and Masters, and Ministers, what to do in such like cases; Even so to declare against miscarriages, as to free those who are innocent from the guilt and censure of them.

And so now I have done with the First General Part of the Text, which is the Sentence or Judgment it self in these words, *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit*.

The Second is the Proof or Argument for the confirmation of it, in these, *If so be the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*. This expression [*if ye be*] it is not to be taken *ambiguously*, as doubting whether it were so or no; but *positively*, as asserting and affirming it to be so indeed. The word *εἰ* in the *Greek*, it is not a conjunction *conditional*, but rather *causal*. *If so be*, that is, *forasmuch*. And so we shall find the word used in some other places, as 2 *Thes.* 1. 6, *εἰ καὶ ἡμῶν τὰς διὰ*, seeing it is a righteous thing with God; yet so, as the Apostle does here provoke them, and implicitly stir them up to consider whether it be so or no: as 2 *Cor.* 13. 5, *Examine your selves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves*, &c. This clause it may be considered of us two manner of ways: First, *Absolutely*, as it is in it self, *The Spirit of God dwells in you*. Secondly, *Argumentatively*, as it is in its connexion; *Forasmuch*,

or because the Spirit of God dwells in you, therefore ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit.

First, Take it absolutely in it self, *The Spirit of God dwells in you*; This is spoken not only of the Romans, as belonging to them alone; but as common with them to all believers, who have likewise a share in it. The Spirit of God dwells in all the children of God; take notice of that. This is frequently declared in Scripture, as 1 Cor. 3. 16, *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.* And chap. 6. 19, *Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God; and ye are not your own.* And so Eph. 2. 2. *In whom also ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

When it is said both here and in other places, *That the Spirit of God dwells in the children of God*; there are three things which are implied in this expression: First, *Presence*. Secondly, *Operation*. Thirdly, *Continuance*. He dwells in them; that is, he is in them. And he dwells in them; that is, he rules in them. And he dwells in them; that is, he rests, and remains, and abides, and continues still in them.

First, I say, Here is impli'd *Presence*. He dwells in them, that is, he is in them. There is a special and peculiar presence which the Spirit of God doth take up in the children of God. Not only common, and general, and essential, whereby he is present even in wicked men, and in Hell it self (*Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?* Psal. 139. 7.); but a presence of grace, and favour, and goodness, as proper only to themselves. The Spirit of God is first of all in Christ our Head, in whom he is unlimited, and without measure. And then he is in us, who are the members of Christ derivatively, and occasionally from him. So that now we have the Spirit of God after another manner of Dispensation than we had in the state of *innocency*, and before our fall. In the state of *innocency*, and in our first Creation, the Spirit of God it was in Adam immediately for his own particular person; and if that we had stood innocent, should have been immediately in us also. But now since the fall of man, and in our state of *recovery* by Christ, the Spirit of God is in us after another way of conveyance. For he is now first of all in Christ, as our *spiritual Head*; and then he is consequently in us as members belonging to that Head. This for his simple presence and being in us. Yea, he is not only in us by his Grace, but by his Person; He is really in us, and united to us.

Secondly, When it is said, *that the Spirit of God dwells in us*; hereby is signified not only his *Presence*, but his *Activity and Operation*; Doing all those things to us which a dweller or owner of any house does to the house which he dwells in, and has relation unto. He is in us, and he is in us profitably, and as making us so much the better for his being in us. And this does express it self in sundry performances of his towards us.

First, Of instructing and teaching us; That's one property belonging to an Householder and Dweller. *I know Abraham, that he will instruct his household*, says God, Gen. 18. 19. Thus does the Spirit of God for us. *The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you*, Joh. 14. 26. And again Joh. 16. 13. *The spirit of truth, when he comes, he shall guide you into all truth*. So 1 Joh. 2. 20, *Ye have an unction from the holy One, and ye know all*

all things. And again ver. 27, *But the anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you, but as that anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lye.* Isa. 30. 21, *Thou shalt hear a voice behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk in it, &c.* This is a very great advantage, especially in times of error and uncertainty, to have such an happy Monitor, and Teacher, and Instructor, as this is, for the guiding and directing of us.

Secondly, As the Spirit of God dwells in us to teach us what's to be done; so to provoke and stir us up to the doing of it upon all occasions. We of our selves, even there where sometimes we know what is our duty, yet we are apt to be very careless and neglectful of it. Now therefore does Gods Spirit, where he dwells, excite us, and put us upon it. *I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye.* Psal. 32. 8. Beckning and hinting, as it were, to us what at any time he requires of us.

Thirdly, He dwells in us also, to restrain, and mortifie, and subdue sin in us. The Spirit of God in his Children, as it shews them what is to be done, or not to be done by them; so it helps them also to do it, or to abstain from it. It enables us to do that which God commands, and it strengthens us also against that which God forbids, and prohibits us from. So that now, as on *one* side in reference to our *committing of evil*, we have besides our own natural corruption, the inticements of the Spirit of Satan joining with our own corrupt hearts; so on the other side, in reference to the abstaining from evil, we have besides the work of Grace in our hearts, the assistance of Gods *Holy Spirit* in us, quickning that Grace which he has wrought, and enabling us against the temptations and assaults of the Devil made upon us.

Fourthly, He dwells in us, so as to improve and to set home upon us all the Ordinances and Means of Grace; the Word, and Sacraments, and Prayer; all these are made effectual to us by the help of the Spirit of God in us. What's the word considered simply in it self? Why, it is but an *empty voice*, it is but a *dead letter*. It is the Spirit, which comes with the Word, which makes it to be *spirit* and *life*, and to be *effectual* and *advantageous* to our Souls. And so for the *Sacraments*, what are they of themselves, but only weak and feeble Elements? It is the *Spirit* which puts *virtue* into them. So Prayer, what is it without the *Spirit*? which to this purpose *helps our infirmities, and makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*, as the Apostle speaks in *Rom. 8. 26*.

Fifthly, In a way of Comfort and special Consolation; whiles he evidences to us our state and condition in grace, and gives us hope of future Salvation; which is that which he likewise does for us. He does not only work grace in us at first, but he also shines upon his own graces in us, which he hath already wrought, and bears witness *to* and *with* our Spirits, *that we are the children of God*. He does not only *anoint* us, but *seal* us; and is in the nature of an *earnest* to us.

And so as for any other occasion else besides, wherein we stand in need of Comfort, we have the Spirit of God helping and assistant to us, for the comforting and encouraging of us; supporting and sustaining us under our infirmities, and exhibiting his own love unto us, which is more than all the world besides, and the comforts of it,

it, as it is *Psal. 4. 6, 7, Thou hast put more gladness into my heart, &c.*

Sixthly and lastly, He dwells in us so as to repair us, and to reform us there where we are amiss, and have any decays of grace and goodness in us. The Spirit of God is a good Landlord and Inhabitant in that Soul in which he dwells, who will not suffer it to run to ruin, or perish, or fall to decay; but will restore it, and renew it, and make it up upon every occasion. We may being left alone to our selves, take ill Tenants, let all go to havock; And Satan where he once gets possession, he destroys, and pulls down all, and lays waste; But the *spirit of God* is a dweller in us to better purpose; namely, so as to amend us, and reform us, and make all right again.

The consideration of this point, thus explain'd and enlarg'd as we have heard, may be thus far useful to us:

First, As it teaches us accordingly to suffer him to dwell largely in us, we should give up our selves to him, as rooms and lodgings to him; give him the keys of our Souls and all we have to dwell in them; To dwell in our understandings, to dwell in our wills, to dwell in our affections, to dwell in our whole man; let no room be shut against him. Let us open to him when he knocks, and invite him to us of our selves, to turn in and come unto us. Let him not only lodge with us for a night, like a *traveller* or *wayfaring-man*; but let him dwell with us as a constant *inhabitant* all our days, as knowing that we shall be no *losers* at all by him. Other Inhabitants may perhaps be burdensome now and then to those places where they inhabit; But such a person as this is, will not be so, but will bring his *recompence* and *reward* with him.

Secondly, It should teach us to give all *respect* that may be to him. Take heed of *grieving* him, of *resisting* him, of *vexing* him, of *despising* him, and the like. Take heed of rejecting his invitations, of stifling his motions, of refusing his *suggestions* to us; whereby we shall very much provoke him to withdraw himself from us, and to carry himself as a *stranger* to us. Ye know how it is amongst men, how they do not care to be there at any time, where they are not with *acceptance* and *respect*; No more does the Spirit of God, who is in this regard a *curious spirit*, and sensible of any rudeness and miscarriage towards him, which he will not easily put up. And therefore should we be curious and cautelous likewise in our *entertainment* of him. Take heed as of grieving him in his *servants*, and as dwelling amongst us in the dispensation of his *Ordinances*; so of grieving him also in *our selves*, and in his *gracious operations* upon us. Little do we think what we do, when we shut such a blessed *dweller* and *inhabitant* as this out of doors. If we be careful to give all attendance to honourable Guests amongst *men*, How much more does it become us to do so to the *spirit of God* in his approaches to us.

Thirdly, We should from hence give all respect to the *Saints* and *Servants of God*, upon *this* consideration amongst the rest. Is it so indeed, that the Spirit of God dwells in his children? Then let us take heed of wronging or injuring any such persons as these are, either by word or deed. Take heed of grieving their Souls; take heed of abusing their Bodies, and of offering any violence unto them; For there is one *within* them, who will take their part, and be *aveng'd* upon all

all such as deal unworthily with them. He will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of them that spoiled them, as it is *Prov.22.23*. It is that which the Apostle lays down for an undoubted and unquestionable truth, That if any man defile, or destroy the Temple of God, him will God destroy, *1 Cor.3.17*. And that we might not restrain it only to the material Temple, as reaching no further than so; he explains it presently of the mystical, in the words immediately following, *For the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are*. Seeing Believers are Gods Temples, wherein himself is pleased to dwell and inhabit, therefore should we take heed of doing any thing which is amiss towards them. And that's the second thing imply'd here in Dwelling, to wit, *activity and operation*.

The third and last is *abode and continuance*. Dwelling it is an act of daily and constant residence. And this is further observable in the Spirit of God, in reference to his Children, He is in them, not only as in an *Inn*, but as in a *Mansion-house*; nor as a *Lodger* only, but as an *Inhabitant*, who is resolv'd not to remove from them. Thus *Job.14.16*, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever*; which as it is true of the whole Church in general, so of every member of the Church in particular. Thus again, in *v.17*, *For he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you*. So *v.23*, *We will make our abode with him*. And *1 Job.2.27*, *The anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you*. *Psal.132.13, 14*, *The Lord hath chosen Sion, he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it*. This is another thing implied in this expression.

This is so upon these grounds: First, The *Unchangeableness* of his Nature. Men they may change their dwellings upon every turn, because they are not long in a mind: But for the *Spirit of God*, it is not so with him; *In him is no variableness, nor shadow of turning*, *Jam.1.17*. *His gifts and calling are without repentance*, *Rom.11.29*. *He is yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever*, *Heb.13.8*.

Secondly, The *Love* of God towards his Children; This makes for this truth also. There where men bear *great affection*, they love long to continue and abide, and are loth to depart. Now the Spirit of God having taken pains with his children, and framed them, and built them up for himself, he does accordingly take a special *delight* and *contentment* in them, and does not love to leave them; They are near and dear unto him.

Thirdly, The *Power* of God; This is conducing hereunto likewise: There is none who is able to *dispossess* him, or turn him out. There are many that are fain to leave their houses, because they are not able to keep them, or hold them any longer; but are now and then, whether by fraud, or force, or necessity, *dispossess* of them; *The strong man keeps the house till a stronger than himself comes*, as our Saviour tells us in the Gospel: Yea, but there is none now that is stronger than God. He is able to hold it out against any that shall offer to oppose him; *My Father is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand*, says Christ of those who are his sheep, *Job.10.28, 29*. And it is as true also of those who are his House.

This

This makes much for the comfort and consolation of the children of God, against all Doctrines and Assertions to the contrary, which teach falling *from Grace*; and that the Spirit of God which is once had, may be quite lost and extinguish'd for ever. No, it cannot be so; for Gods Spirit does not only *lodg* in us, but *dwell in us*, which is a word of *abode*.

Indeed I must add this, That the Spirit of God may sometimes be *hid* and concealed in us, and that (as I hinted before) occasionally sometimes from our neglect and miscarriage toward him; but he is not absolutely and quite gone. As a man may be in his house as to some private room and *corner* of it, though he does not always so fully *appear* and shew himself in it. So the Spirit of God may be in us for the *truth* of Grace, though he be not always in us for the *evidence* of Grace; and though he be not always in us for the *comfort* of Grace. This, it may for some time be obscured and concealed, whiles the other holds good. Thus 1 *Joh.* 3. 9, it is said of a Child of God, that *his seed remaineth in him, &c.* And *Isa.* 6. 13, it is said of a godly man, that he shall be as a *Teyl-tree*, or as an *Oak*, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves; so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof. The Spirit of God is call'd an *Anointing*; and so the Grace of it is laid in *oyl*, which is durable, and holds colour, and is not easily wash'd off again; as those things which are of a *waterish* nature do pass away presently, and are gone that we see them no more.

Indeed, as for the *common gifts* of the Spirit, and the partaking of the Holy Ghost *so*, that is sometimes exprest to us in Scripture as that which is more *transient*, as we may see in *Heb.* 6. 4, 5, 6, common illumination, and common affection, and the like; but the *sanctifying-gifts* of the Spirit, they are things which are of another nature, and such as cannot be lost or taken away from those persons who are once possess'd of them.

The Grace of the Spirit of Christ in a Christian, hath the nature and condition of a double stability in him; the one is the firmness of the *Root* whereinto he is set; and the other is the constancy of the *Fountain* which is continually flowing into him.

First, There's the firmness of the *Root* whereinto he is set. *Col.* 2. 7, *Rooted and built up in Christ.* Built upon Christ as the *Foundation*; and planted upon Christ as the *Root*. Those that are so, they cannot possibly wither or decay, or quite *fall away*. But because they abide in him, therefore his *Spirit*, and the *Grace* of it, does *abide* in them.

Secondly, It hath the Constancy of a *Fountain*. *Joh.* 4. 14, *Who-so-ever (says Christ) shall drink of the water that I shall give him, he shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be a well of water springing up into everlasting life.* And so *Joh.* 7. 38, 39, *He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This be spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive:* And that's now also the *Third* thing implied in this expression of *dwell-ing*, applied to the Spirit of God in his children, namely, as a matter of continuance and abode in them.

I might here also further observe from this passage here before us of the Spirit dwelling in us, as spoken of the children of God: How that
Reli-

Religion it is an *inward* business, and takes hold on the *inward man* especially above any thing else. *The kingdom of God is within you*, as our Saviour tells his Disciples, *Luke 17. 21*: where, by the *kingdom of God* is meant the *kingdom of Grace*. And so accordingly Christ is said to *dwell in our hearts*, *Eph. 3. 17*, which are the receptacles of his Graces in us.

And among others, of *two* especially, whereby he is said more especially to dwell in us, namely, *Faith* and *Love*. He dwells in our hearts by *faith*, whereby we are united to him *mystically* in the place now alledged, *Eph. 3. 17*. And he dwells in our hearts by *Love*, whereby we are united to him *morally*. *1 Joh. 4. 16*, *God is love; and he that dwells in love, dwells in God, and God in him*. Thus does the Spirit dwell in us by his Graces, which are *intrinsic* things to us.

And so now I have done with the First Consideration of this passage, *If so be*, or *forasmuch as the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*; as it may be taken absolutely, and positively in it self, as declaring the simple condition of Gods Children.

Now further, Secondly, We may look upon it *Argumentatively*, and and in *connexion* with the words immediately preceding, *Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit; because the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*. From whence we may observe thus much, *That the dwelling of Gods Spirit in us, is an argument that we are the children of God, and truly regenerate*. This (I say) we gather from the *connexion*, and the dependance of these words upon the former. The Apostle Paul had in the foregoing words declared this concerning the *Romans*, *That they were not in the flesh, but in the spirit*. This was a very comfortable and honourable testimony which he gives of them. Yea, but how now does he *prove* it, and make it good unto them? Why, he does it from this consideration, *Because the Spirit of God dwelleth in them*. So that the *Spirit's* inhabitation, it is an argument and proof of *Regeneration*. Whosoever are the Temples of the Holy Ghost, and such as wherein the Spirit of God does make his residence, they are such as are born of God. This is the point which we have here before us. This is suitable and agreeable to other places and Texts of Scripture besides; as *1 Joh. 3. 23*, *Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us*. And *1 Joh. 4. 13*, *Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit, &c.*

The ground hereof is this, Because that God giveth his Spirit to none but to his children; therefore where his Spirit is, and dwells, we may conclude that they are indeed his children; according to that of the Apostle, *Gal. 4. 6*, *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his son into our hearts, crying Abba Father*. Where (by the way) we may observe what spirit it is which is here meant, and whereof we speak; namely, the *spirit of adoption*, which is consequently the *spirit of grace and supplication*.

Therefore let us make this Use of it, Even from hence to take a trial and discovery of our selves, what we are. We have heard heretofore out of the former Verses in this Chapter, of what concernment it is to us, Not to be in the flesh, but to be in the spirit; that is, not to be carnal,

but *spiritual*; not to be in the *state of nature*, but in the *state of grace*; in regard of the great *inconveniences* which do attend the *one*, and *commodities* which do attend the *other*.

Now here we may comfortably discern and distinguish which of these we are, according to this present character which is here exhibited to us, *If so be that the spirit of God dwell in us*. Those in whom the Spirit of God doth indeed dwell, they are such as are indeed in the spirit. And again, those in whom the Spirit of God doth not dwell, they are not in the spirit, but in the flesh.

Therefore let us (I say) call our selves to an account in this particular, and observe how indeed it is with us; and know to this purpose, that these words are to be taken exclusively. This in-dwelling of the spirit is so far forth an argument to us of our adoption and regeneration, as that indeed nothing less than it can be an argument of it. It cannot be said, Ye are not in the flesh but in the spirit, because ye have these and these outward enjoyments and accommodations, Riches, and Honours, and Pleasure, and Trade, and the like; but because ye partake of Gods Spirit. It is not because your selves dwell in such and such Houses here upon earth, but because the Spirit of God dwells in you, who has his house and dwelling in Heaven. It is spiritual accomplishments that give us the title to spiritual privileges.

Again further, When we speak of the Spirit, and the dwelling of *that*, we must still remember in what kind of sense and notion it is to be understood by us, namely, of the Spirit of *Grace* and *Sanctification*. It is not the Spirit of God according to all kind of acts and communications of himself, which is an infallible argument of our adoption and regeneration; but the Spirit of God so far forth as sanctifying us, and making us better. The Spirit of God may be in many persons as to the *common* gifts of it, and yet those persons not be *spiritual* but *carnal* for all that; not be after the *spirit*, but be after the *flesh*. But then is the in-dwelling of the Spirit an infallible note of a good estate and condition in grace, when it is in us as altering our natures, changing our hearts, subduing our corruptions, ordering of our affections, imprinting his own blessed Image and Character upon us, and making us every way suitable and conformable to himself. If so be that the Spirit of God do indeed dwell in us *thus*, we may then conclude of our selves, as the Apostle Paul does here conclude of these *Romans*, *That we are not in the flesh, but in the spirit*.

And so I have done also with these words in their *argumentative* consideration, and as taken in their connexion; *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be, or forasmuch as the spirit of God dwelleth in you*.

SERMON XI.

ROMANS 8. 9.

Now if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

There is nothing more necessary for Christians, than to be well assured of their spiritual condition and state of Grace; to understand how it fares with their souls; and to be able to give some reason and good account of the hope that is in them. Now this is that which the Apostle Paul was desirous of in the behalf of these believing Romans to whom he here writes. He had in the foregoing part of the Chapter discours'd of Sanctification in general, and of the condition, and disposition, and endeavour both of spiritual and carnal persons. And here now he applies it in particular to the Saints which were then at Rome, putting them upon the search of their own hearts and consciences in reference to this business; shewing them whereby they might know whether themselves or no were so qualified as to conclude themselves in a good estate as to their inward man, and the expectations of a better life. And he does it from this character, According as they had greater evidence of the Spirit of Christ abiding in them; laying down this for a Truth and Conclusion to be received by them, and by all others, That if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is (then) none of his. Let a man have what he will besides, if he have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And let him be whose he will besides, if he be not Christ's, he is but in a miserable condition. And let him have of Christ's what he will, if he have not his Spirit, it's all to no purpose.

IN the Text it self there are two General Parts considerable, The *Antecedent*, and the *Consequent*. The *Antecedent* is in these words, *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ*. The *Consequent* in these, *He is none of his*.

We begin with the First General, *viz.* The *Antecedent*, *If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ*: Where there are divers points observable of us; but I shall pitch and fasten upon those which are most material.

And first of all, For the *Spirit of Christ*, to speak to *that*, what we are to understand by *this*. This, it is sometimes taken for the *soul of Christ*, his *humane spirit*, as *Luk. 23. 46, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*; that is, *my soul*. They are the words of *Christ* giving up the ghost. But this was so proper to himself, as it was communicable to none other besides, and therefore cannot be here understood by us. Therefore here we are to understand rather, the *Spirit of God* himself, or the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Holiness, the Divine Spirit. This is here denominated in this Text, the *Spirit of Christ*. And we may conceive it to be so upon a *two-fold* account especially; The *one* in reference to Christ considered as God, and as the *second Person* in the *Blessed Trinity*; and the *other* in reference to Christ considered as God-man, the Mediator and Redeemer of the Church. In reference to Christ in either of these notions, is the Holy Ghost called the Spirit of Christ.

First, In reference to Christ considered as God, and the Second Person in the Blessed Trinity, so is the Holy Ghost called his Spirit; namely, as *proceeding* no less from the Son, than from the Father. As he is the Spirit of the *first Person*, so he is the Spirit also of the *second*. Thus whiles *Mat. 10. 20*, he is call'd the *Spirit of the Father*; *Gal. 4. 6*, he is call'd the *Spirit of the Son*; And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the *spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father*. So *1 Pet. 1. 11*. The Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Christ, they are both *one and the same*, because he does proceed from Christ considered as God. And there are other expressions in *Scripture* which do make for this likewise; as *Joh. 16. 14*, where Christ speaking of the Holy Ghost, says, *He shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you*; or of me, as some expound it, *27. 17*. So *ver. 7*. of the same chapter, *If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you*. So *Joh. 15. 26*, *Whom I will send unto you from the Father, &c.* These and the like places do intimate the Holy Ghost to be the Spirit of the Son, as well as of the Father; and to proceed as truly from the *one*, as he does from the *other*.

And it may be further confirm'd and made good to us by *Reason* likewise, so far forth as it is any way applicable to so great a Mystery as this indeed is: And that thus; If the Third Person in the Sacred Trinity did not proceed from the Second Person as well as from the First, it would follow from hence, That the Third Person were not distinguished from the Second: For all kind of *distinction* in the Godhead, it does arise from *Original relation*. Now if the Holy Ghost did not proceed from the Son, there would not be any *Original relation* betwixt them, and so no *distinction*. The *Proposition* of the Argument is proved thus: Because every thing in God is either *absolute* or *relative*. Now that which is *absolute* and *essential*, it is common to all the Three Persons; and therefore it is the *relation* only that *distinguishes*. Now this relation of the Holy Ghost to the Son in this blessed Trinity of Persons, it does consist in the *emanation* and *procession* of him from the Son, who is therefore called the *Spirit of the Son*.

The Use which we are to make of this *Point* thus explain'd, to our selves, is especially to confirm us in this great Article of our Christian Faith, and that against the Error and Mistake of the *Greek Church* in this

this particular; who raise this Doctrine and Point of Divinity out of their Creed, viz. *The proceſſion of the Holy Ghost from the Son*; affirming, That he proceeded only from the Father. the first Person in the Trinity, and not from the Second: Now we hold, and believe, and declare, That he did equally proceed from both; namely, from the Father and Son; and so we find it in the *Athanasian Profession*, which is received by us: *The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son, not made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.* This, it is founded (among other places of Scripture besides) upon this Text now here in hand, where he is called expreſſly *πνεῦμα χριſτῶ*, the *Spirit of Christ*; namely, as coming from Christ. And that's the *first reference* which is considerable of us in this denomination, to wit, in reference to Christ as God, and as the Second Person in the blessed Trinity.

The Second is in reference to Christ as he is Mediator, *God and Man*. The Holy Ghost is call'd the *spirit of Christ* in this respect also; and that for two reasons more.

First, As bestowed upon Christ. He is his Spirit considered *passively*, and by way of *reception*.

And Secondly, As bestowed by Christ. He is his Spirit considered *actively*, and by way of *collation*; as he partaked of the Spirit himself; and as he does convey it and communicate it unto us.

First, He is call'd the Spirit of Christ, as he is in a special manner bestowed upon him, and received by him. Thus Joh. 3. 34, *God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him.* Christ, he did receive an *unmeasurable portion of the spirit*. Hence Luk. 4. 1, he is said to be *full of the Holy Ghost*. Joh. 1. 14, *Full of grace and truth*. And Col. 1. 19, *It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell*; not only of the Deity, but also of habitual grace, as the *effusion of the spirit*. Thus Isa. 11. 2, *The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord.* And Psal. 45. 7, *God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladness above thy fellows*; that is, hath endowed thy humane nature beyond measure with the gifts of the Spirit. They are words which refer to Christ. So then, forasmuch as there is none in whom the gifts and graces of the Spirit do more eminently and fully appear, than they do in Christ; who does receive most largely of them. Therefore is the Spirit call'd emphatically, and *πνεῦμα χριſτῶ*, *The spirit of Christ*.

But further, Secondly, He is call'd the *Spirit of Christ* not only as bestowed upon him, but as bestowed by him, and conveyed from him, as also he is. He has it first in himself as our Head; and then conveys it to us who are his Members. *And of his fulness we do all receive grace for grace.* We have not the Spirit first of all in our selves; but derivatively from Christ; and because we have so, it is therefore called again *the spirit of Christ*.

The consideration of this Point may be thus far useful to us, As it may teach us a special ground for the honouring and extolling of Christ, and yielding all respect and obedience to him; not only in regard of the benefits which come to us by his Blood; but likewise which come to us

by his Spirit; which we can expect to partake of no otherwise but only by him. Seeing the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, therefore we must go to Christ for it, if ever we will be partakers of it, and receive it through his conveyance of it, or not at all. And for this purpose, be united to him, and acquainted with him; so much good as there is in the Holy Spirit, and in the gifts and graces thereof; so much necessity of our Interest in Christ, whose Spirit this is, as he is here declared unto us.

And so much of that Point, That the holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ; which we have shewn according to a two-fold explication, and with a two-fold reference; The one considered as God, in the proceſſion of the Third Person from the Second in the Sacred Trinity: And the other considered as God-man, in the bestowing of the Spirit upon him, and bestowing it by him.

A Second term which we may take notice of in this First Part of the Text, is the *having of the spirit of Christ*, which is here implied to be such as Christians are indeed capable of; and is now further to be explained by us, what it is, and wherein it consists. Now this it relates especially to the work of grace and holiness in their hearts. They are said to have the Spirit of Christ in them, so far forth as they have *gracious qualities and dispositions* wrought in them; not only when they have common gifts and abilities bestowed upon them, which does make them in a large sense *partakers of the Holy Ghost*, Heb. 6. 4; but when they have *ſaving and ſanctifying-graces*; when they are regenerated and born again. This is indeed here in this Text, *To have the spirit of Christ*.

To speak distinctly of this Point, and to give you the full sense and notion of it; This having of the Spirit of Christ it is considerable in two particulars: The one as to matter of *conversion*; And the other as to matter of *communion*. As to matter of *conversion*, so we are said to have the Spirit of Christ in us, when we are by his Spirit made *partakers of ſaving-grace*, and effectually changed by the *renewing of the spirit of our minds*, as the Apostle speaks in Eph. 4. 23. As to matter of *communion*; so we are said to have the Spirit of Christ in us, whenas his Spirit daily residing and taking up his abode in us, does continually stir up that grace which he hath already wrought. Now in either of these considerations is this having of the Spirit of Christ agreeable to all true believers. They have the Spirit of Christ in them as to the working of grace in them at first, and making them partakers of his holiness; And they have the Spirit of Christ also in them, as following them with frequent excitements and provocations to that which is good. They have the Spirit in the *graces* of it; and they have the Spirit in the *motions* of it. The Spirit in the *beginnings* of it, and *first entering* (as it were) into them; and the Spirit in the *proceedings* of it, and further residence and dwelling in them. Both of these taken together, do make up to us this *having of the spirit*.

First, Take it as to matter of *conversion*, and the working of grace in them at first; Those who are true believers, they have the Spirit of Christ in them thus, as they are changed in the spirit of their minds. Every man by *nature* has an *evil spirit* in him; he has the stamp and
image

image of the Devil imprinted upon him; he has sinful and vicious principles, which do dispose him for nothing but *wickedness*. But now when a man comes to be a *Christian*, it is otherwise with him. As it was with *Saul* when he came to the *kingdom*, he had *another spirit* bestowed upon him: even so is it also here; and *another spirit* than *that* was too; for *that* was but a *spirit of Government*, which is a *common* gift of the spirit. But a Christian when he comes to be a Christian, he has *another spirit*; that is, a *spirit of sanctification*. *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*, 2 Cor. 6. 9. This it consists partly in the renewing of the mind and understanding: when a man comes to be once converted, he has new notions and apprehensions of things over what he had before, and thinks otherwise of them, of Grace, of Sin; of Actions, of Persons. *We have the mind of Christ*, says the Apostle in 2 Cor. 2. 18. And the mind of Christ it is a branch of the spirit of Christ. And partly it consists also, and principally, in the *framing of the Will and Affections*. This Spirit of Christ it has *gracious and holy desires and inclinations which do belong unto it*; a spiritual favour, and a spiritual delight, and an affecting of spiritual things above all other things besides. Where this Spirit of Christ comes, it brings every thought into captivity unto the obedience of Christ.

Secondly, Take it as to matter of *Communion*. Those who are true believers, they have the Spirit of Christ in them thus also, as dwelling and abiding in them, and infusing not only gracious principles, but gracious motions into them, quickning them to good, restraining them from evil, directing them in difficulties, comforting them in tribulations, and every way supplying them with suitable and seasonable applications. And that's a second thing here considerable, to wit, the having of the Spirit of Christ, what it is; and how far it is agreeable to those who are true believers, and may be predicated of them.

A *Third* thing which we may here observe from this present passage before us, is the word of uncertainty or ambiguity; *If any man hath not*, &c. As implying that there are some that have not; and that even also of those sometimes who pretend to have. The Apostle *Paul* here supposes (as he very well might) that there were divers persons who were professors of Christianity, who yet were void of the Spirit of Christ, and which had none of that in them; and so indeed there are. As all men have not faith, so all men have not the Spirit of Christ neither, which is the giver and worker of faith in us. There are some, who as the Apostle *Jude* tells us, *are sensual, not having the spirit*, ver. 19. The Spirit of Christ is such a business, as all kind of persons indefinitely are not partakers of it.

This is clear from hence; Because all are not elected, nor adopted, nor the sons of God, whereof the Spirit of Christ is a consequent, and proper effect. *Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts*, &c. So that no *son-ship*, no *spirit*. Now all men are not Gods children, and so have not that which is pertinent thereunto. This makes it to be so much the greater mercy to those which are so. Distinguishing-mercies are the great mercies of all; and though they are all one in themselves, and simply considered, with those which are com-

mon and extended; yet to us they are so much the greater, as they are more peculiar and appropriate. And so is this amongst the rest, of having the spirit of Christ in us; it is that which all men have not: what a mercy is it then to those that have?

And so now I have done with the First General Part of the Text, viz. The *Antecedent*; *If any man have not, &c.*

The Second is the *Consequent*, in these words, *He is none of his. None of his*; that is, belongs not to him, has no interest in him, is no member of him. This is the state and condition of all those who want the spirit of Christ. The handling of the *Consequent* is best performed in its connexion with the *Antecedent*. And so we shall now at this time take it in the very words of the Text it self; *Whosoever hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* This is the express word of God in so many terms, and so needs no other proof of it than it self.

But it may be amplified and illustrated to us from sundry grounds and considerations; as, First, Because they have nothing whereby to knit them and unite them to Christ. Whosoever they be that are Christs, they must be knit and united to him, and made one with him. Now such as those who are devoid of his spirit, they cannot be his, because they want that very thing which is the principal band of this union and spiritual conjunction. Look as in the natural body the head and members of it are knit and united together by one and the same soul, which does animate them, and quicken them, and inform them: Even so likewise in the mystical body, Christ and all true believers they are knit and united by one and the self-same spirit which does enliven them and join them together in one. Thus 1 Cor. 6. 17, *He that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit.* And 1 Cor. 12. 13, *By one spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, &c.* Hence the giving of his spirit to us, is made an evidence of our union to him; 1 Joh. 4. 13, *Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his spirit.* By his spirit Christ dwells in our hearts, and makes us also to dwell in him; which accordingly those persons that want, do not belong unto him, nor are any of his.

Secondly, Those which have not the spirit of Christ, they are none of Christ's; Because they have not faith whereby to apprehend and lay hold upon him. There are two bands (as I have formerly told you) of our union to Christ; The band on his part, is the *spirit*; the band on our part, is *faith*: Now those which have not the *former*, they consequently have not the *latter* neither; those which have not the spirit of Christ, they have not faith which is a gift of the Holy Ghost, and such as is wrought no other way in us than by the spirit of Christ himself; *Christ dwells in our heart by faith*, Eph. 3. 17; and this *faith it is a fruit of the spirit*, Gal. 5. 22; and accordingly called the *spirit of faith*, 2 Cor. 4. 13.

Thirdly, Those who have not the spirit of Christ, they are none of his; Because they have not a principle of spiritual life in them, whereby to bring forth fruits unto him. They which are Christs, they are such as live to Christ, and honour him in their course and conversation. Now those which have not the spirit of Christ in them, they do none of

of this, nor cannot do it. Look as a *dead man*, and one that is void of the *life of Nature*, he cannot produce or put forth the actions of *natural life* in a way of the world; no more can a carnal man, and one that is void of the *Spirit of Christ*, produce or bring forth the actions of grace, and which belong to a Christian. As our Saviour himself tells his Disciples, Joh. 15. 5, *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; but without me, or separated from me, ye can do nothing.* This is the case of all those in whom the Spirit of Christ is not abiding.

Fourthly, Those who have not the Spirit of Christ, they are none of his; Because they are altogether unlike him, and different from him, yea indeed contrary to him. This is an *unseparable property* of all those that belong to Christ, that they are made conformable to the *image of Christ*; that there is some *suitableness, and agreement, and correspondency* betwixt Christ and their souls. Now those who have not his spirit, they have none of this *resemblance* upon them: for that which makes any to be *indeed like unto him*, it is no other than the likeness of his spirit appearing in them; *As obedient children fashioning themselves suitably to him.* 1 Pet. 2. 14.

Whiles it is said here, *That if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his*: This is to be taken by us as *exclusive* of any thing else which might be conceived to make up this Defect. The *having of Christ* is so necessary to our *interest in him*, as that nothing else which is short of this, will be sufficient or available to us. What-ever any man may have besides, if he have not the *spirit of Christ* with it, he is notwithstanding a *stranger to Christ*, and such an one as Christ hath no respect or affection for him.

Wee'l instance in some few particulars which do sometimes deceive many people in this regard.

First, *Strength of Parts, or common and ordinary illumination in spiritual and divine Truths.* This is that which now and then goes very far, and is an occasion of *great mistake to sundry persons.* There are many, who because they have some knowledge of the *things of Religion*, and are able (it may be) to discourse somewhat commendably and plausibly of them, therefore do from hence apprehend themselves to be in a *good condition* in regard of *Grace.* But alas! this will not serve the turn, if there be nothing else with it. It is not so much what knowledge men have of God, as what *love and affection to him, what relish and savour of Religion* and the *Truths of Christ* wrought into their spirits, which may evidence his spirit to be in them. This is that which is chiefly and above all things to be looked after by them.

Secondly, *Sweetness of nature, and temper, and constitution*; it is not this which will suffice neither. This, it is a very good advantage and commendation there where it is, and has a great deal of amiableness in it. It was that for which our Saviour in the Gospel looked upon the young man, and loved him; loved him, that is, with an *humane love*, not with a *divine*: He loved him, that is, he *savour'd him*, and express'd himself *civilly* to him; or he loved him with a love of pity and commiseration. This is that which is agreeable to such persons as those are. An ingenuous disposition without a gracious frame of spirit, it is that which may

provoke *pity* rather than any thing else; and it is such as none should content or satisfy themselves withal alone, as not *sufficient for them*. That which we call *good nature*, if it be not qualified and sanctified by *grace*, and nature renewed, it will not serve to keep a man out of Hell, nor intitle him to be a *member of Christ*.

Thirdly, *Common Morality* and *Civil Righteousness*; It is not this which will serve neither, without the Spirit of Christ. It was that which some of the *Heathen Philosophers* were noted and eminent for (though some of them not deserving that opinion which was had of them neither); and so there are some likewise which have it still within the pales of the Church, and it is all which *they have in them*; but it is that which will not suffice to interest them in Christ. And therefore the Apostle *Paul* renounced it to this purpose in regard of himself, as we may see in *Phil.* 3. 9; where though he had before signified, that he *was as touching the righteousness which is in the Law, blameless*; yet when he comes to consider better of it, he resolves this concerning it, *That he desires to be found in Christ not having his own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*. So little account did he make of his *own righteousness* without a tincture of the Spirit of Christ, and righteousness in him.

Fourthly, The *outward badge of Religion*, and the *priviledges of the visible Church*; It is not this neither which does intitle to Christ without his Spirit. Men may *enjoy the publick Ordinances*, be *baptized*, and *receive the communion*, be *Christians* as to *external profession*, and yet for all that be none of Christs. Therefore the fore-mentioned Apostle, when he came to compare himself in his *state of grace* with his *state of nature*, he does abandon all reliance upon such things as these are; as we may see again in the fore-mentioned chapter, *Phil.* 3. 4, *Though I might also have confidence in the flesh: if any man thinks that he hath whereof he might boast in the flesh, I more; circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the Tribe of Benjamin, &c. But what things were gain unto me, those I counted loss for Christ, &c.* And before in the third verse of the same chapter, he says, *We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh*. He did not lay his comfort in his participation of the *outward Ordinances*, but in his partaking of the Spirit of Christ.

Lastly, It is not *Christian Alliance*, or relation to those who have grace, and godliness, and goodness in them. Although it be a great priviledg and advantage in many respects to be descended of Religious Parents, and to have Religious Friends; yet this alone of it self will not give a man a relation to Christ: Nay, though a man were allied to Christ himself according to the flesh; yet it would not serve the turn neither, without partaking of his Spirit. In *Mat.* 12. 47, 48, when the people told our Saviour of his Mother and Brethren standing without, and desiring to speak with him; he tells them, *That they were his mother and brethren which did the will of his Father in heaven*. Implying thereby, that *personal godliness* was above all *natural relations* whatsoever, and such as did gain greater favour and acceptance with him. And therefore again in another place, *Luk.* 11. 27, *When a certain woman lift up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee,*

thee, and the paps that gave thee suck: our Saviour adds, Yea rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.

Thus we see in all these particulars (and more might be added unto them), how nothing without the Spirit of Christ will serve the turn to make a man his.

The consideration of this Point (for the Use and Application of it to our selves) may be drawn forth into this following Improvement. First, As a word of *Terror* and *Altonishment* to divers sorts of persons. Is it so indeed, That those who have none of Christs Spirit, they are none of his? What may we then think will become of a great many of people in the world, yea and which live in the bosom of the Church! How few are there which will belong to Christ upon this account! yea, how many will be found strangers to him! To this purpose we may take notice of a *threefold* spirit in men, which is exclusive of this spirit of Christ in them, and so separating of them from him.

First, Their *own* spirit.

Secondly, The spirit of the *World*.

Thirdly, The spirit of *Satan*.

First, They have none of *Christs* Spirit, and so are excluded from being *his*, who have only in them a Spirit of their own; that is, such a Spirit only as is suitable and agreeable to *Nature*. Such persons as have no more but *natural* or *moral* *perfections* in them, without any work of *saving* and *sanctifying* grace wrought in their hearts; who are not changed as to those corrupt principles which they brought with them into the world, but still remain in an *unconverted* condition. Let a man (as I hinted before) have *never so many excellent perfections* and qualifications in a *natural* way; a quick and pregnant wit, a sweet and ingenuous nature, a fair carriage and pleasing deportment in the eye of the world; yet if in the mean time he have not the Spirit of Christ (as he may not have for all this) he is none of his, nor has no portion at all in him. These are such things which now and then make a *show*, and appear gloriously in the eyes of men; which men themselves out of their *own self-love* may sometimes be taken withal; yea and likewise Christian friends may now and then also, being blinded by affection, be in some measure *taken*, or rather *mistaken* with them. But alas! they are not such as will bear the test and trial of Gods Tribunal at another day. We know that quick passage which our Saviour has to the *Pharisees* in such a case as this is, *Luk. 16. 15, Ye are they which justify your selves before men, but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed amongst men, is an abomination in the sight of God.*

To this end we must still remember, That the *Spirit of Christ*, spoken of in this place, is the *sanctifying-Spirit*, and not any other; For even *Hypocrites*, and *Reprobates*, and *Cast-aways*, and such as those have had the Spirit of God in the *common* and *general* gifts, who yet notwithstanding have been never the nearer; The Spirit of *Prophecy*, the Spirit of *Government*, the Spirit of *Fortitude*, and the like; This is that which *natural* men may have, but it is not *this* which is here intended. To have the Spirit of Christ *indeed*, is to have a Spirit *leading* us to Christ, stamping his Image upon us, and conforming us to him-

self; which *natural* men do not partake of in the midst of all other qualifications, which are upon them. They have no other but a Spirit of their own. That's the first.

Secondly, Which have only the Spirit of the *world*; which is a *carnal* Spirit further improved. This is that which we find mention made of, *1 Cor. 2. 12.* There are divers such persons as these, who favour not the things of God, but only the things of the world. The world is in their very hearts, as *setting their affections* upon it, and cleaving to it; such as these as they have not the *love of the Father* in them, so neither have they *the Spirit of the Son*.

Thirdly, Which have the *Spirit of Satan*; The Spirit that *rules in the children of disobedience*. Of these there is no question to be made, but that they are excluded from Christ, as being opposite to him, and set and carried against him; As where there's *envying*, and *strife*, and *confusion*, and every *evil work*, this wisdom *descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish*, *Jam. 3. 15, &c.* This is the *state and condition* of such persons as are led by either of these spirits. That *they are none of Christs*.

Now to set out the *misery* of such a state as this is the more *effectually* unto us, and to make it so much the more *terrible* to them that are in it; It will not be amiss for us to look upon it in the full extent of it, and to consider indeed what it is, what is meant by this expression, when it is said, *That those who have not the Spirit of Christ in them, they are none of his*. This perhaps at the first hearing may seem to carry no great matter of *terribleness* in it; but yet if it be duly thought upon, it is a business of very *sad importance*. This exclusion of *relation to Christ*, and of *interest in him*, as his members, it is very grievous and prejudicial. And that in the consideration of three particulars especially:

First, In point of *Grace*.

And secondly, In point of *Comfort*.

And thirdly, In point of *Salvation*.

First, In point of *Grace*. Those that are none of Christs, they can put forth no actions of *godliness* or *goodness* which are to be done by them. We are *Gods workmanship created in Christ Jesus to good works*, says the Apostle Paul, *Eph. 2. 10.* He is the Spring and Fountain of all good whatsoever which comes from us; and we must have it from him. Now therefore those that are not his, they cannot consequently do any thing which is good; at least in such a manner as may be accepted from them.

Secondly, In point of *Comfort*; Those that are none of his, they cannot expect to partake of this neither. He is the happiness of all conditions; and every passage of providence towards us, it is sweeten'd by Gods love in him. Those that are members of Christ, *all things work together for their good*; whereas those which are out of Christ, all things work and conspire against them; and whatever they be in their own nature, yet they are offensive to them.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, And specially in point of *Salvation*. Those that are none of Christs, they are none of those who shall ever come to *heaven*, or be made partakers of *eternal life*. Forasmuch as there is no salvation but by Christ, there is therefore no salvation out of Christ. Whosoever they be that are not by the Spirit of Christ incorporated and ingrafted into him, they shall never have any *benefit* to this purpose from him, nor shall never at another day be owned by him. As they are not his indeed, so neither will he ever acknowledg them, or own them to be his; but will say unto them at that day, *I know you not*. And this indeed is the great *misery* and *unhappiness* of not being his. If Christ were an *unprofitable* person, such a relation as there were no good at all to be gotten by him, it were then no great matter at all, whether one were his or no, as it is sometimes with many men. But this is the case with those who are not related to him, that they are deprived of the *happiness* that comes by him; And having no interest in his *Person* have consequently no share in his *Salvation*.

Again, To aggravate this so much the more, there is this further considerable in it, That those who are not his in *one* sense, they are to their smart his in *another*; And those that are not his in a sense of *favour* and *gracious acceptance*, they are consequently and from hence his in a sense of *wraith* and *fiery indignation*. Those that are not his *Friends*, they are his *Enemies*; And those that are not *members of him*, they are hereupon *oppositers to him*, and *be to them*; and so will he deal with them, *He will take vengeance upon all them that know him not*. &c. *Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power*, as it is *2 Thes. 1. 8, 9*. This is the condition of all those who are not Christs; And this is the condition of all those who have not the Spirit of Christ in them. And this is the first application, in a way of *terror*, &c.

The second is by way of *Trial*, as it calls us to a due *search* and *examination* of our selves. Is it so indeed and in good earnest, That whosoever have not the Spirit of Christ, they are *none of his*; Then what are we for our particulars? Whether have we his Spirit or no? it would be inquired into by us. For this purpose, let us look into our selves, and reflect upon our own hearts. Consider what are our *opinions* and *apprehensions* of heavenly things; what esteem we have of the *Word of God*, and of the *Truths* which are contained in it; what delight we have in the *Law of God*, and the *Doctrines* according to *Godliness*. Those who have Christs Spirit, they do very much *relish* and favour the *truths* of Christ.

Again, How stand we affected to *sin* and *evil ways*, either in our selves or others? The Spirit of Christ wherever it is, it is a *mortifying* Spirit, *purging Corruption* out of us, and restraining us from that which is evil. *They that are Christs have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts*, Gal. 5. 24.

And so for others, who are the *children of God*, and are *members of Christ*; How stand we affected to them likewise? Wherever there is Christs Spirit, there will be a cleaving to those who are carried

by the same Spirit; as members of the Body to those that are animated by the same Soul.

And finally, For our lives and conversations, and *outward man*; This Spirit of Christ, where it is, it will have an influence upon this also. If we *live in the Spirit*, we shall also *walk in the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 25.

This Spirit, it will *animate* us, and *regulate* us in every performance. Thus may we improve this point in a way of *trial*, and *scrutiny*, and *examination*.

Thirdly and lastly, In a way of Excitement: Here is that which may stir us all up to *labour* for this *Spirit of Christ*, and to endeavour to *express* it in us all we can, and upon all occasions, as being that whereupon depends all our interest in him, and benefit by him. And when we say the *Spirit of Christ*, we may understand hereby two things especially, either first of all, that *Spirit* which does express it self in all his *children*, consider'd at large. Or secondly, That *Spirit* which did in a special manner *put forth it self* in his *own person* whiles he lived here upon earth, and convert amongst men in the world.

First, Take it more *largely*, and which seems here principally to be intended in the Text, and as we have handled it all this while; That *Spirit of Christ* which does *animate* all his members, and does express it self in them. We should be perswaded from hence to endeavour after it, and to labour for it, that we may be able to find it in our selves. What-ever we do besides, we should be careful to look to *our spirits*, and to take heed unto them, as the Prophet *Malachi* advises us, *Mal. 2. 15*. For this is that which of any thing else does *distinguish* us, and shews us to be that which we are indeed. Every man is that which his *mind* is, and especially his *spirit*, which is the most retired and intimate part of it; And therefore there is greatest cause to look to that above any thing else.

There are many people that please themselves in a fair outward and civil conversation in the face of the world, which yet nourish a desperate heart and *spirit* sometimes under it, of pride, and envy, and malice, and bitterness, and the like; Why, such as these now are of all others to be most abhorr'd, both of themselves and others, and are so far from the Spirit of Christ, as that indeed they have the Spirit of *Satan* himself infused into them, and poured upon them. They are such as do most resemble him of any other persons besides. If the *Devil* were to take upon him *humane shape*, and were to live here upon Earth, he would not be a *common Drunkard*, and *Swearer*, and *Whoremaster*, and *Prophane Person*; he would in his way and kind *scorn* to be guilty of such sins as these; neither would it be so much for his *interest* so to be: No, but he would be a close *Hypocrite*, a vain-glorious *Pharisee*, a secret enemy to the *Power of Godliness*, an obstrueter, and hinderer, and underminer of the ways of *Religion*; He would be proud, and envious, and malicious, and spiteful against goodness; and all this it may be under some pretences even of goodness it self; So that this *spiritual* wickedness, it makes
men

men to be likest to him; And upon that account it concerns men so much the rather to look to their spirits, that they may not have the Spirit of Satan, but the Spirit of Christ. And that first of all as it is in us more largely.

But secondly, Take it more *Emphatically*; The *Spirit of Christ* for that Spirit of *his*, which did more eminently and in a special manner put forth it self in his *own person*, whiles he lived here upon earth, as a pattern and example to us. This is that also which is the Spirit of Christ to be found in us; and we are to labour to be made partakers of it. *He that saith he abides in him, ought himself also so to walk even as he walked.* Now what kind of Spirit was that which did occasionally express it self in Christ whiles he conversed here in the world? We may consider it in sundry particulars.

First, It was a Spirit of *meekness*, and *humility*, and *lowliness of mind*. *Learn of me* (says he) *for I am meek, and lowly in heart, Mat. 11. 29.* And *Phil. 2. 5.* *Let the same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus*; And what mind was that? Ye may see by that which follows, even a spirit of *humility* and *self-abasement*; *who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God; but yet made himself of no reputation, &c. He humbled himself, &c.* Christ had a Spirit of *humility* in the midst of his greatest perfections. And how should those that profess themselves to be his, have the same *mind* and *spirit* in them likewise.

Secondly, A Spirit of *patience* in the *wrongs* and *injuries* which he endured. He hath *herein* left us an example, that we should follow his steps, *who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously, 1 Pet. 2. 21, &c.* He prayed for his very *enemies*; *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do, &c.*

Thirdly, A Spirit of *pity*, and *compassion*, and *tenderness of heart*; especially to the souls of men, and in reference to their eternal salvation. He was much grieved for mens unbelief and hardness of heart, and he wept over their miseries and incorrigibleness.

Fourthly, A Spirit of *love* and *condescension*, and *sweetness of carriage* towards all that he conversed withal. He would not *break the bruised reed*, nor *quench the smoking flax*; nor discourage the bud-dings and beginnings of goodness in any. He was ready to excuse their failings, and to put the best interpretation that might be upon them; *The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*; as in the case of his *sleepy Disciples*.

And yet fifthly also, a Spirit of *zeal*, in such case as God was dishonoured and offended by any; here he could not but express his displeasure and indignation against them; as reckoning himself to be interested and concern'd in the *dishonour of his Father*.

Last of all, A Spirit of *Fruitfulness*, and *Communicativeness*, and *Edification*. He went about doing good; and still left some *footsteps* and *impressions* of his goodness behind him; wherever he came, he

was

was never well but when he was doing the will of him that sent him, and accomplishing that great *end* and *errand* for which he came into the world. In these and the like particulars have we a *lively description* and exemplification made unto us, of the Spirit of Christ; and that in his conversation, whiles he lived here upon earth.

The sum of all comes to this, That we endeavour for our particulars, to have the like in some degree and measure infused into us; And that so much the rather, that we may be assured of his *owning of us* at another day. That it may appear, that *he abides in us*, and *we in him*; And that though he have left the world in his person, yet he continues in it still as to his Members, whiles the *same Spirit* is now acting in *them* which acted in *Him*.

And let none think themselves priviledged or exempted in this particular, whether one or t'other; For the Proposition is here *indefinite*, and without exception; Whether high or low, rich or poor, great or small, *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*.

SERMON

SERMON XII.

ROMANS-8. 10.

And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin: but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness.

There's a threefold evil or mischief, which is the fruit or consequent of sin, and accordingly matter of mourning and discouragement to the Servants of God: The one is, that it exposes to wrath and eternal condemnation. The other is, that it leaves a stain and defilement, and mark of pollution upon the Soul which is guilty of it. And the last is, that it makes us subject to the Law of death. Now answerably does the Apostle Paul here in the course of this Chapter, endeavour to satisfy the Romans, and in them all other Christians, in each particular, and to preserve them from being dejected or cast down in the thoughts of them. As for the first of these evils, he does it in the first verse of it, where he tells them, and confidently assures them, That there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. As for the second, he does it in the ninth verse of it, where he tells them, That they are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; and so in that respect free from the Law of sin. The third and last, he does here in this verse which we have now before us at this present time; where he signifies, that however Gods children are subject to death by reason of sin, yet it is not total, but partial; It is not the death of the Soul, but only of the Body; As long as Christ is indeed dwelling, and by his Spirit abiding in them. The body indeed is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. This is the Coherence of the words.

IN the Text it self there are two general parts considerable: First, a *Concession*; And secondly, a *Qualification*. The *Concession*, that's in these words, *The body is dead, because of sin*. The *Qualification*, that's in these, *But the Spirit is life, because of righteousness*.

We begin first of all with the former, viz. the *Concession*, *The body is dead, because of sin*. Wherein again two particulars more: First, *The evil it self*, and that is *mortality, or bodily death*, *The body is dead*. Secondly, *The occasion of this evil, or the original from whence it proceeds in those whom it falls upon, and that is guilt, because of sin*.

For the first, to wit, the *evil it self*, that is here exprest to be *mortality or bodily death*, *The body is dead*. Dead, that is, *subject to death*, as surely as if it were dead already, and lying in the grave. This is the state and condition of the *body*, and that which we may also here observe, even in the servants of God themselves, in whom Christ himself,

dwells by his Spirit, even such as these, they are subject to death as well as others. The bodies even of *Christians* and *true Believers*, they are *frail* and *mortal bodies*, as well as the bodies of any other men besides; and so we find them to be call'd in the verse immediately succeeding. *Psal. 49. 10, The wise man dieth, as well as the fool.* And *Eccl. 2. 16, How dieth the wise man? even as the fool*; that is, there is no difference betwixt them as to the state and condition it self. It is equally incident to *both*; to one, and t'other. This is the point which we have here before us,

This is grounded partly upon the general decree and sentence which is past upon all men; *Statutum est, It is appointed unto all men once to die*, as the Apostle tells us, *Heb. 9. 27.* And partly also upon those *frail principles*, whereof the godly themselves do consist in their *natural* and *human condition*. It is no wonder for *dust to return to dust*, or for the body to be resolv'd into that *matter* out of which it was first made, which is the same both in good and bad.

This is a point which we need not stand much upon to prove, being so evident by daily experience. The main business which concerns us is the right improvement and use of it, which may be briefly this.

First, To teach us to be frequently in the thoughts and meditations hereof; we should look upon our bodies as *mortal* and *corruptible*, even the best that are here in this world; and so be often considering of our latter end. What the Apostle speaks of the *Gospel* in reference to the Ministers, is true also of *Grace* it self in reference to all *Christians* whatsoever, That *they have this treasure in earthen vessels*. And because they have so, therefore they should often think so, and be continually in reflections hereupon.

Secondly, We should hence be perswaded against all *inordinate care* of the body, pampering of it, and glorying in the excellencies and accomplishments of it; For alas, it will quickly be dissolv'd, and moulder away, and lie in the dust; It's *dying*, yea 'tis *dead already*, as the Holy Ghost here expresses it to us, for an intimation of the certainty of it. As sure to be so, as if it were *actually* so indeed; and therefore to be accordingly disposed and affected in reference to it. Seeing our bodies are dead, we should be dead too, as to any *excessive* endeavours about them, and rather mind our better part which is of longer continuance.

Thirdly, Let us not from hence be offended at the troubles of the children of God here in this life, that they are in deaths oft, as *St. Paul* speaks of himself, in this life; as thinking that some strange thing does happen unto them, for it is not so; whiles their bodies are subject to death, it is no marvel that their lives are also subject to *affliction*, and that they are exercised with sickness and other evils, which make way for death, and tend unto it. Though Christ be in you, yet the body which you carry about you is dead. And that's the first particular here considerable, which is the evil it self.

The second is the *occasion* of this evil, or the *ground* whereupon it proceeds, and that is *guilt*; *The body is dead, because of sin*; Sin is the cause of death. Take notice of that. Thus *Rom. 5. 12, As by one man sin enter'd into the world, even so death by sin; and so death pass'd*

sed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Rom. 6. 23, *The wages of sin is death.* It is *sin* which exposes all men, both good and bad, to the stroke of death.

When it is said, That *the body is dead, because of sin*; this is true upon a double account: Either *remotely*, or *immediately*; Remotely, so it is *because of sin*; that's because of *Original sin*, the first sin of all. Immediately, so it is *because of sin*; that is, because of *Actual sin*, consequent to *Original*.

First, Take it *remotely, because of sin*, that is, of the *first sin* and transgression that was in the world. *Adam* by his sin against God in eating of the forbidden fruit, did thereby bring *death upon himself* and his *whole posterity*. This is clear and manifest from the sentence which was denounced against him, *Gen. 2. 17. In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely dye*; that is, thou shalt become a mortal creature, thou shalt be put into a state of Death; and that not only for thy self, but for all others that shall come after thee and from thee.

Where (by the way) we have an account given us of the Mortality and Death of Infants, and such as live not to the committing of Actual sins, from whence it proceeds in them; namely, from the guilt of Original Sin which is upon them. According to that also of the Apostle, *Rom. 5. 14. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adams transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come*; that is, who had not committed Actual sin as he had done, which little children had not. That's one explication, *because of sin*, that is, of *Original sin*, and sin consider'd *remotely*.

Secondly, *Because of sin*, that is, because of *Actual sin*, and sin consider'd more *immediately* and proximately. This is the sad condition of all people, whiles they live here in the world, that by their sins they give occasion to God in justice to bring death upon them. Thus *David* notes it of himself, *Psal. 38. 3. There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger*; neither is there any rest in my bones, *because of my sin*. And again ver. 5, *My wounds are putrified and corrupt, because of my foolishness*. So *St. Paul* notes it of the *Corinthians*; *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep*, that is, dye, nameiy, for their *unworthy partaking of the Lords Table*, *1 Cor. 11. 30. Who gave Jacob for a spoil, &c. did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned*, *Isa. 42. 24, 25, &c.* Still Death is upon all occasions resolved into *sin*, as the ground and original of it.

There's a double Influence which sin may be said to have upon Death as Causal of it: The one is a *Physical* and *Productive* Influence; And the other is a *Moral* or *Demeritorious*.

First, It hath sometimes, and in some cases and persons, a *Physical* and *Productive* Influence upon it; as immediately and directly effecting it, and bringing it about. There are abundance of persons in the world, whose very sins are their death thus; by their luxury, and wantonness, and intemperance, and such things as these. *The body is dead, because of sin*; Its true in a *Physical* acceptation.

But secondly, Its always so in a *Moral*, and considered *demeritoriously*. So that wherever there is Death, there is sin antecedent to

it, and laying a ground and foundation for it. Man, if he had not sinned, *he had not died*, nor he would not dye yet. It is *sin* which is all in all unto him in this particular, and which hath brought this evil upon him; yea, even upon the best men that are, and those who are at present regenerate and born again; yet forasmuch as they have sin still in part remaining in them, which not is wholly extirpated or rooted out, therefore are they upon this account liable to death, which doth accordingly prevail upon them, and take them away. These believing *Romans* themselves, to whom the Apostle here writes allowing them *to be in the Spirit*, and to have *Christ dwelling in them*; yet because they have *sin dwelling in them* too, and they are *in part flesh*, therefore does he here intimate, that even *they* were exposed to death also.

The consideration of this point may be thus far useful to us, as it may serve, First, To convince us of the grievous nature of sin, and to humble us under the guilt and sense of it, as being that which brings so much evil and mischief with it, as consequent upon it. Is it so indeed, that Death comes by sin, and that our bodies are mortal from hence? Why then, what cause have we to *loath* and *detest* sin, and to look upon it as our *greatest Enemy*. If we be not so sensible and apprehensive of the vileness of sin in the nature of it, as indeed it becomes us to be; let us at least be sensible and apprehensive of the miserableness of sin in the effects of it, and the punishment which is annexed unto it. And if we are not sensible of it, as it is an *offence* and *dishonour* to God; yet let us at least be sensible of it, as it is a grievance and *annoyance* to our selves, and occasions the greatest evil to us of any thing else.

And so let us learn to justify God in his dealings with us; and to condemn our selves as the causes of our own suffering. God delights not in the death of his servants, it is precious in his eyes; but it is *sin* which hath provoked him h:reunto, and hath extorted this punishment from him. Death, and all those sicknesses and diseases which do any thing tend to it, they all come from sin. And sin, it is a *fruit* and *effect* of our own *corrupt will*, and therefore to this purpose we must lay the fault upon our selves, as the causes of our destruction.

And further, In all such things as these, let us still remember to look to sin, and to have an eye to that. In times of common Plagues and Diseases, which do now and then fall out in the world, or any occasional distempers whatsoever; Let us not look so much at the sickness, as rather at the sin; nor so much at the *natural* causes of it, as rather the moral. Seeing death comes by sin, therefore let us mourn for sin, in case of death; and labour to remove the sin, that so the death may be removed with it.

And especially, labour and endeavour to get the pardon and forgiveness of sin to be sealed and assured unto us. For as the *cause* of death is *sin*, so the *sting* of death is sin also; and it is that which makes it most of all deadly and pernicious to us; which being taken out of it by Christ, through the merit and vertue of his blood applied unto us, it has not that *efficacy* upon us, to the prejudicing or hurting of us.

And this serves to satisfy an Objection, which possibly might be made against this Doctrine which we have now before us; How can the mortality

talities of Believers be resolv'd into sin as the cause of it; when as their sins are fully pardon'd and forgiven to them in Christ; from whence it might be thought, that they should accordingly be exempt from death, which is occasion'd only by sin, as the cause of it.

To this we answer, That the pardon of sin does not exempt from death it self, which was at first occasion'd from it, and inflicted upon it, by reason of *Adams* transgression; but it exempts only from the *curse* and *malignity* of death; which still remains in force for the thing it self, by virtue of the first occasion; only the *sting* of it, which is the *wrath* and *anger* of God, that ceases to the children of God, through the grace of Christ; And death in stead of an Enemy, is turn'd to a Friend unto them; both as a means for the abolishing of *sin*, yea even of death it self; as also for the perfection of grace, and passage to glory, in co-partnership with Christ himself, *who shall change our vile bodies, making them like to his glorious body, &c. Phil. 3. 21.*

So then, we see here a plain difference betwixt the state and condition of Gods children and other persons, in regard of Death. It is true, that the general *occasion* of it is to both of them one and the same, and that (as we have heard) is *sin*: But the *manner* and *carriage* of it is various and distinct in them; Because that sin which is the occasion of death to the godly, it is pardon'd and forgiven unto them; and so the *venom* and *bitterness* of it is taken away from them; But that sin which brings death upon the wicked, it is *retained* and *continued*, and so the evil of it aggravated to them, and more enlarged. That's the second branch in this first general, to wit, the *occasion* of the evil mentioned. And so now I have done with the first general part of the Text, to wit, the *Concession*, in these words, *And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin.*

The Second is the *Qualification*, *But the Spirit is life, because of righteousness.* Wherein, as in the former, we have two particulars more: First, The *Benefit* it self. And secondly, The *Ground* of this *Benefit*. The *Benefit* it self, that's express'd in these words, *The Spirit is life.* The *Ground* of the *Benefit* in these, *Because of righteousness.*

First, For the *Benefit* it self, *The Spirit is life.* By the Spirit here in this place, we are to understand the Soul; yet not simply and absolutely consider'd, but so far as renewed by Grace, the regenerated and sanctified Soul, that's here the Spirit, as *Heb. 4. 12.* This, it is *life*, or *live's* (as some Translations carry it), namely, the *life of grace here*, and the *life of glory hereafter.* This is the sense and meaning of the words.

And the point which we learn from them is this, That Gods children, although they be mortal and subject to death, in regard of their Bodies; yet they live, and are in a state of Immortality, in regard of their Souls; *The Spirit is life.*

Whiles we say, That Gods children do live in regard of their Souls; this is not to be taken *exclusively*, but rather *emphatically*; not *exclusively*, as denying the immortality of the Souls of other men; but *emphatically*, as fastening a special immortality upon these. We do acknowledge and also profess the immortality of all mens Souls at large, who-soever they be, both bad and good; even *wicked* men, when their Souls are departed, their Souls do live, as to the substance and being of them;

but their life is as good as no life unto them, being in continual *woe* and *misery*, and therefore in Scripture express'd by *Death* and *Perdition* it self, 2 *Thef.* 1. 9.

But now when it is said here in the Text, That the Souls of Gods children live, or that their Spirits are life, we are to take it in a two-fold explication: First, As to the life of *Grace*. And secondly, As to the life of *Glory*. They live as to both.

First, For the life of *Grace*. They live such a life as this; even when their Bodies are in a manner *dead*, that is, *subject* or near unto it; *The just shall live by faith*, *Rom.* 1. 17. There may be a *lively* and *vigorous* Soul (and oftentimes is) in a *wither'd* and *decayed* Body. Then when the *Flesh* is ready to *perish*, yet the *spirit* may *flourish*; According to that of the Apostle, in 2 *Cor.* 4. 17, *For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet our inward man is renewed day by day*. The Apostle speaks it of *himself*, and of *other Believers* together with him. And so David, *My flesh and my heart faileth me; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever*, in *Psal.* 73. 26.

This is so upon this account: First, Because they are lives of a several *nature* and *kind*. Those things which are of a various sort or kind, they may very easily subsist in the failing or decay of one another. Now thus it is with the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*, with the *Body* and the *Soul*, the life of *Nature* and the life of *Grace*. These are lives of a different kind and consideration, and so they do not mutually depend one upon the other. These things which are hurtful to the one, they do not prejudice the other; and those things which do benefit the one, do not advance or promote the other.

Secondly, There is this also in it, That the good of the one is sometimes so much the more advanced and promoted by the prejudice of the other. The decay of the life of the body is now and then so much the more conducing and helpful to the *furthering* of the Soul; Therefore the life of the Soul may very well consist with it, as making for it. But how, may some say, is that? Namely, as it makes men so much the more to reflect and to look into themselves. Those who are always well and in health, they do for the most part little consider of their latter end, neither are they so careful to provide for a better world; whereas those who are sick and crazy, they are often put upon such thoughts as these are. Those Tenants, who have often warning given them, to depart out of their house, they are careful to provide themselves a dwelling somewhere else. And so is it also here, Those Christians who have many weaknesses and infirmities of body upon them, they are put upon it, to provide them a being in a better place; and accordingly to use all such means as are tending thereunto; To repent of their sins, and to amend their lives, and to strengthen their graces, and to do all things which it becomes them to do, who look for happiness and eternal life in another world. This is that which follows hereupon.

The consideration of this point may be thus far useful to us: First, as it may serve for an encouragement to the children of God in the midst of all those bodily infirmities which they are subject to here in this life. What, though their *bodies* decay, yet their *souls* and *spirits* may *live*; and this is that which is chiefly and principally to be lookt after

after by them. There are a great many of people in the world, whose care is all taken up about their outward man; Oh, if the body ail any thing, then all the means that can be used for the recovering and repairing of it: But for the Soul, its no matter at all what becomes of that; there's little regard or consideration had of it. But now as for the true Servants of God, this is that which is most of all minded and lookt after by them; and they find by experience the benefit and advantage of so doing; yea, and that now and then in reference also to the other. A sick Soul is not so ordinary holpen by an healthful body; but a sickly body is many times very much advantaged by an healthful Soul. The Spirit of a man will sustain his infirmities, but a *wounded Spirit who can bear?*

Secondly, Here's that also which calls us to search and self-inquiry. Is it so indeed, that the Spirit lives, when the Body is dead? How is it then to this purpose with our selves, in such cases as these are? Whether do we upon occasion find this spiritual life in us upon that bodily death? And whether does sickness, and weakness, and diseases, and distempers of body make us better or no in our Spirits and inward man? It is that which God intends to us by it, and expects from us in it, and therefore accordingly we should consider, whether it be with us so or no. And know, that if we be not the better, we are so much the worse, and so shall be yet more and more, if we look not better to it; like such physick, which if it does not cure, it kills. And so much of the first kind of life which the Spirit may be said here to live, *viz.* the life of *Grace*.

The second is the life of *Glory*. *The Spirit is life*, that is, it lives such a life as this. And so there is this in it, That though Gods children dye at last, as well as others, the death of the body; yet their Souls even in that very death it self live for ever in Heaven. This is the general vote and doctrine of Scripture, which it holds forth unto us in sundry places and passages of it. Thus 2 Cor. 5. 1, *We know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, &c.* And again in ver. 8 of the same Chapter, *We are confident I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.* Implying, that when they were absent from the body, they were present with the Lord; that is, in the words of the Text, when the *body should be dead*, at the same time the *Spirit should be life*. And so St. Paul as to his own particular, *Phil* 1. 23. *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*; intimating, that when he was dissolved he should be immediately with him. This was that which he took for granted. And so our blessed Saviour himself in his answer to the good thief upon the Cross, *This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.*

This is grounded not only upon the *nature* of the Soul it self, which cannot dye, but more especially upon the decree, and purpose, and promise of God himself, who hath appointed us to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ, as the Apostle else-where speaks. The Souls even of wicked men themselves, they have a natural immortality in them, insomuch as they do not dye, as to an absolute *extinction* of them; but a *glorious* immortality they have not; such a life as whereby to be always in the enjoyment of the presence of God. This is such as is proper only to Believers and the children of God.

The

The Use of this point is very comfortable against the inordinate fear of death. It is comfortable against the fear of enemies, and such as threaten the Servants of God sometimes with the inflicting of death upon them; That their malice it can reach no further than the outward man. And so our Saviour himself teaches us to improve it, *Luk. 12. 4, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.* And more exprelly *Mat. 10. 28, Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the Soul: But rather fear him who is able to destroy both body and Soul in hell.* I say unto you, fear him.

And so as for death in any other way whatsoever, here is that which does serve very much to mollifie and mitigate it to them, and the thoughts of it either as to their own particular persons, or to their Christian Friends dying in the Lord; That though it be a privation of one life, yet it is a promotion of another; and though it separates the Soul from the Body, and other Friends here below in the world; yet it joins it so much the closer to Christ, and makes them partakers of a better estate and condition in a better place. *If Christ be in them, though the body be dead, yet the Spirit is life.* And that's the first particular which is here observable and considerable of us in this second general, to wit, the Benefit it self.

The second is the ground of this Benefit, and that is exprest in these words, *Because of righteousness, δια δικαιοσύνης*. By righteousness here, we are to understand two things; either first of all the righteousness of Christ imputed, which gives us a right and title to salvation. Or else secondly, *Inherent righteousness*, as a condition required in that subject which shall indeed be saved; In either sense it is, *because of righteousness*.

First, In order to the righteousness of Christ. Christ has merited life eternal for all those who are members of him, by vertue of the righteousness which is in him. Thus *Heb. 5. 9, Being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.*

This is grounded both first of all upon the exactness of Christs righteousness it self, consider'd in its own nature, and within its own compass, which is sufficient to merit. And also secondly, upon the infiniteness of Christs Person, who was God, and so what-ever he did was of exceeding dignity and value, that there could be no exception against it. And then likewise thirdly, upon the near union and conjunction which is betwixt Christ and all his members, making up together with him but one compleat and mystical Body; So that the life which he lives, they must needs live also.

This (for the Application of it to us) shews us: First, What great cause we have, all that may be, to labour to get into Christ, and to endeavour to become members of his Body; that so partaking of his righteousness, we may consequently partake of his salvation, and of eternal life it self. This is that which we may observe and take notice of in the Apostle Paul, who upon this ground prefer'd his being in Christ above any thing else besides, *Phil. 3. 8, 9, Yea doubtless, and I count all things to be but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, &c. And that I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law; but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.* This was the mind of the blessed Apostle when

when he came to be truly enlighten'd; and so it should be likewise the mind of every one else besides, upon the same ground together with him.

Secondly, Seeing our Souls came to live by vertue of the righteousness of Christ, meriting and procuring at the hands of God this life for us, this then shews us, how far we are indeed beholden to Christ, and what cause we have to be thankful to him; even as much as to one, who has redeem'd us from death it self, and hath bestowed life upon us. If we would be sensible of such courtesies, as to our natural life; How much more should be so as to our *eternal*, which is the greatest and chiefest of all. And that's the first sense of *righteousness* here in this place, viz. the *righteousness of Christ imputed*.

The second sense is of *righteousness inherent*. This is not to be understood by way of *merit*, but of *qualification*. That *righteousness* which is in a *Believer*, and which is wrought by the Spirit of Christ in him, it does so far forth intitle him to *eternal life and happiness it self*, as it does in some sort fit him and prepare him for it. In *Col. 1. 12*, it is said, that *God hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of saints in light*. How hath he made us meet for this inheritance? Namely, by putting such holy and gracious dispositions into us, as are suitable to such a *blessed condition*. And so we live the life of *Glory*, having first partaken of the life of *Grace*. This is still the Doctrine of the Scripture. Thus *2 Thes. 2. 13, 14*, *God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, whereunto he hath called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ*. Thus *1 Job. 3. 14*, *We know that we are translated from death to life, because we love the Brethren*. And *Phil. 3. 20*, *Our conversation is in heaven; from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ*. From whence, that is, either from *which heaven*, as the *Terminus of Christs motion*; or else from *which conversation*, as the *ground of our expectation*.

This is so upon this following account and consideration: First, Because *inherent righteousness* is an argument of our union with Christ, as flowing to us from this union. Now those who are *one with Christ* (as I hinted in part before) are sure to be saved; because whiles it goes well with the Head, it cannot go ill with the Members.

Secondly, Because this *righteousness* it is a part of the *first fruits of the Spirit*, and a beginning even of *Heaven* it self to us. *Glory* is begun in *Grace*; and therefore *Grace* is a fore-runner of *Glory*, and an assurance of it, wherever it is.

Therefore let us accordingly look upon these things in this connexion. He that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself as he is pure, *1 Job. 3. 3*. Let us see life following upon righteousness, and let us see righteousness making way for life; and never think to attain to the one without the other. Indeed I say, we must not lay our stress here, nor make this to be the chiefest ground of our hope. *Inherent righteousness*, as it is in us, is very imperfect here in this life, and will not endure the test of Christs Tribunal; That is only the righteousness of Christ apprehended by faith, and by God imputed; but yet we must

have this *inherent righteousness* also in us, without which this life cannot be expected by us.

This teaches us how to judg of our selves, both for and against. If we live wicked lives, or lives which are void of grace and holiness, as to the expressions of them, we cannot so comfortably conclude of our interest in heaven; or so remaining ever make account to come to that place, because *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, as the Scripture tells us. But on the other side, If we live goddily and holily in this present world, this may be an evidence and assurance to us of our living happily in the world to come; As the Apostle *Paul* concludes it of himself, and from himself of all others that are like him, *2 Tim. 4. 7, 8, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, which God the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing.* And so ye have also the second particular considerable in the second general, which is the ground of the Benefit here mentioned. *The Spirit is life, Because of righteousness.*

And thus now have we handled these words in the next and proper sense; by taking *Body* here in the Text for the Body commonly so called, and in the natural signification of it. And by taking the *Spirit* here for the *Soul of man*, as the other part of him.

But now yet further, there is another sense which may be also fasten'd upon these words, which I will briefly name and propound unto you; and that is this, That we understand first of all by the Body, the *Body of sin*, or *unregenerate part* in us, which hath now and then in Scripture such an *appellation* put upon it, in regard of the *analogy* and proportion which it bears *thereunto*; which is here said to be *dead*, that is, *mortified* and *subdued* in Believers. And *because of sin*, that is, in reference to sin; as *touching* or *concerning* sin. And that secondly. By the *Spirit* we understand the *regenerate part* in us, a *newness of Nature*, which is said (on the other side) to be *life*, that is, *active*, and *vigorous*, and *lively*, as touching *righteousness*.

And so now according to this Interpretation of the words, we have here in this present verse set forth unto us, the admirable effects and consequents of the *being of Christ* in Believers; And that in two points especially: First, In point of *mortification*; there is a *killing of sin* in them, *The body is dead, because of sin*. Secondly, In point of *Vivification*; *Grace* is *alive* and *active* in them, *The Spirit is life, because of righteousness*.

First, In point of *mortification*. There is a *killing of sin* in Believers; *The body is dead*, as to matter of *sin*; that is, although sin do still in part remain in them whiles they are here in this world, yet it is in them after a *restrained* and *qualified* manner; And so the Scripture does frequently speak of it in reference to them, and of them in reference to it. Thus *Rom. 6. 11, Likewise reckon ye also your selves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* And again *Rom. 7. 6, But now we are delivered from the Law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should live in newness of*

Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. And Gal. 5. 24, They that are Christ's, have sin crucified in them.

This death of sin in Believers, is discovered from a threefold effect or consequent of it in them:

First, In that the Law doth not now so much excite and stir up, and draw out sin in them, as it is said to do in the *unregenerate*, to whom *sin by the Commandment becomes more exceeding sinful, Rom. 7. 13.*

Secondly, In that sin hath not now that prevalency and tyranny over them, but they have always some *reluctancy* with it, and fight and opposition against it.

Thirdly, In that they do not *commit* sin with so much eagerness and intention of Spirit, even there where they do any thing which seems to yeild unto it; *Whoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; that is, doth not make a trade of sin, 1 Job. 3. 9.*

This mortification or killing of the body of sin in Believers, is done (for the explication of it to us) two manner of ways:

First of all, *Originally* in Christ, by the death of him upon the Cross.

Secondly, *Consequently* in us, by the application of Christs death unto our selves.

First, *Originally* in Christ, by his death which he suffered on the Cross. There sin received its first wound; as whereby Christ merited and purchased so much for us. Thus the Apostle Peter speaking of him, says, that *he himself bore our sins in his own body on the tree, 1 Pet. 2. 24.* And *Isa. 53. 10,* he is said to have *made his soul an offering for sin;* not only as to the guilt of sin, but also moreover as to the power of it.

Secondly, It is done *consequently* in us, by the application of Christs death to our selves. What was done in Christ *naturally*, the same is done in us *proportionably*, and by way of *Analogy*; And we are hereby said to be made in this respect *conformable unto him*; so that as the *body of his flesh* was crucified and kill'd in him, so the *body of sin* is also crucified and kill'd in us; This was the Apostles meaning, when he wishes in regard of himself, that he might be made *conformable unto Christs death, Phil. 3. 10.* And again, *Rom. 6. 6, Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed.*

The use of this point comes to a *threefold* improvement, which may be made of it:

First, It shews us the *difference* betwixt the *children of God* and *others*, in whom sin is yet alive.

Secondly, It teaches us more courageously to fight against sin, as a mortified Enemy.

Thirdly, Not to return to sin again, whereunto we are already dead, *Rom. 6. 2, 6, 7.*

And thus much of the first effect or consequent of Christs being in Believers, namely, *mortification*, or the killing of sin in them, *The body is dead, because of sin.*

The second is *vivification*, or the quickening of them to holiness; *The Spirit is life, because of righteousness.* From whence observe thus much,

That the *Spirit of Grace*, where it is in *reality*, it is in *activity*; it is not a meer *dead* or *idle principle* in us, which does nothing at all; but is *productive of the fruits of righteousness*. Thus *Gal. 5. 25*, *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit*. And so *Phil. 1. 11*, *Being fill'd with the fruits of righteousness*. And so likewise, *Rom. 6. 19*.

The ground hereof is taken: First, From the nature of all life in general, which is to be *operative* and *active*.

Secondly, From the *End of spiritual life* in particular, which is especially to *serve God*. Therefore accordingly let us look after this in our selves; let us shew our *faith* by our *works*, our *life* by our *vivacity*, the *principle of regeneration* wrought in us, by the works of *sanctification*, and an *holy life and conversation* produced by us. As we are therefore on the one side, to refrain and abstain from sin, because we are already *dead* unto that, *The body is dead, because of sin*; so on the other side, we are to *practise holiness*, and to be fruitful in the doing of good, because we are now *alive unto God*; and *the spirit is life, because of righteousness*.

And so much may suffice to have spoken also of the *second sense* which may be fasten'd upon these words, by taking them in the *moral* or *mystery*. And so much of this whole Verse, *And if, &c.*

SERMON

S E R M O N XIII.

ROMANS 8. II.

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

The scope of the Apostle Paul in this Scripture, which we have still before us, is to comfort the Believing Romans, and in them all other Christians, against the Fears and Terrours of Death, which through sin they were subject unto. And he does it especially from the Consideration of a two-fold Circumstance. The one is, that it is not Total. And the other is, that it is not Perpetual. The former, That it is not Total, that he shews in the tenth verse, which we spake to the last day. If Christ be in you: the Body (indeed) is dead because of sin: But the Spirit is Life because of Righteousness. This Death, what ever it be, it falls but upon the meaner part of us, the outward man. And if we must needs be mortal, it is some comfort to be so but by halves. The later, That it is not Perpetual: That he declares in this Verse, which I have now more particularly read unto you, where because the Body being also a Part, although the meaner, of us, which might be ready perhaps to be further solicitous about it as not willing to be deprived of it: He does therefore here tell us, That this is not wholly or absolutely lost neither, but shall in time be restored again to us, and delivered from the present evil and disparagement which lies upon it: For, If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal Bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

IN the Text it self there are two General Parts considerable: *The Supposition, and the Inference.* The Supposition, that we have in these words: *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, &c.* The Inference, in these, *He that raised up Christ from the dead shall quicken your mortal Bodies, &c.*

We begin in order with the First: The Supposition in these words, *If the Spirit of him that, &c.* Which as we see, consists of two Branches. First, of *Christ's Resurrection.* Secondly, of the *Spirits inhabitation* in those who are the *Members of Christ.* The Resurrection of Christ, that we have supposed in that clause, *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from*

the dead. The *inhabitation* of the Spirit, that we have in that : If this Spirit dwelleth in you.

First, To speak of the Former, viz. *Christ's Resurrection*: If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead. This is a *Circumlocution* whereby we have described unto us God the Father, under this notion of raising up of Christ. And there are two things which are here distinctly considerable of us. First, The Person mention'd, or imply'd. Secondly, The Action attributed or ascribed to this Person. The Person mention'd or imply'd : That's God the Father. The Action attributed to this Person : That's the raising of Christ.

For the first, The Person here signify'd or imply'd, That's God the Father. Indeed the whole Trinity of Persons had a share in this performance, according to that known Rule, *Opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*. The External works of the Trinity are undivided. The Father raised him up, *Act. 10. 40.* Him God raised up the third day. The Son raised himself, *Joh. 2. 19.* Destroy this Temple, and I will raise it up in three daies. And he spake it of the Temple of his Body, *Vers. 21.* of the same Chapter ; so *Joh. 10. 18.* I have power to lay down my Life : and I have power to take it up again sayes Christ of himself. The Holy Ghost also raised him, *1 Pet. 3. 18.* Being put to death in the Flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. And the Ethiopick Translation renders it the Holy Spirit, which is, the Third Person in the Trinity. So I say, that it belongs in common to all the Sacred Persons. But yet is here ascribed to the Father, as that Person who is usually exprest to be the Fountain of the God-head, as from whom all the Actions of the Deity do originally flow and proceed.

The second thing, which is here chiefly considerable, is the Action attributed to this Person, and that is, the raising up of Jesus from the dead. Jesus Christ, he is thus risen. This is a main Article of our Christian Faith, and is the Doctrine not only of this Text, but of divers others besides. The words of the Angel to the Women that came to his Sepulchre, Why seek ye the Living among the Dead ? He is not here but he is risen, *Luk. 24. 5, 6.* In *1 Cor. 15. 20.* Christ is risen from the Dead, and is become the first fruits of them that sleep : And many such like.

The Ground of this Dispensation is First of all taken from the Nature and Condition of Christ himself, who was such an one, as Death could not long keep in bondage to it self. Thus we have it, *Act. 2. 24.* Whom God hath raised, having loosed the pains of Death : because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. Not possible because he had fully satisfied the Justice of God. And not possible because he was himself the Lord of Life. He that gives Life to every thing else, as the Son of God does, it is not possible that he should be held under Death.

Secondly, He is therefore risen to manifest the Compleatness of that Redemption which he had wrought for us, and to declare us absolv'd and acquitted in the sight and presence of God, according to that of the Apostle, *Rom. 4. 25.* where it is said, That he was delivered for our offences : and rose again for our Justification. Rose again for our Justification ; that is to shew, that there was nothing now behind for us to satisfy, for as much as He himself had now sufficiently paid the debt to his Father in our behalf. See *1 Cor. 15. 17.*

The Use of this Doctrine in hand is especially to oppose it to the scandal, and reproach of the Cross. It may seem to be an opprobrious business, to have

have a *Crucified and Dead Saviour*. Oh but let us consider this withal, that he is such an one as is risen again, and whom Death could not absolutely conquer, or prevail upon, that he should be for ever detain'd under it. *I am He* (saies he) *that liveth and was dead: And behold I am alive for evermore, Amen.* And have the *Keys of Hell and of Death*, as it is in *Rev. 1. 28.* and *2 Cor. 13. vers. 4.* Though he was *Crucified* through weakness, yet he *Liveth* by the *Power of God*. And that's the first particular Truth, which is here supposed, to wit, The Doctrine of *Christ's Resurrection*, in these words, *The Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead.*

The *Second*, Is the *Spirits Inhabitation* in those who are the *Members of Christ*. If, or forasmuch as this Spirit dwelleth in you. This Doctrine concerning the *Dwelling of the Spirit of God in Believers*, we have lately spoken to (as you may remember) at large out of the ninth Verse of this Chapter, from these words, *If so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you*, and so I shall not enlarge upon it at this present time. It denotes, as I then told you, three things especially: First, *Presence or Inexistence*, He dwells in us, therefore he is *in us*. Not *Essentially* only, meerly as he is in all other creatures whatsoever: but after a more *especial and peculiar manner*: Both in the *Admirable Residence* of his *Person* in us, and the effectual *Effusion*, and *pouring forth of his Graces into us*: And more particularly of *Faith and Love*. Secondly, It implies *abode and continuance*, He dwells in us, that is, he is not only with us for a time, as a Lodger, and way-faring Person, but as *staying and tarrying* with us for ever. Thirdly, *Activity and operation*: Purifying us, and repairing us, and governing us, and ruling in us.

Thus, it makes much for the *Honour and Dignity* of the *Servant of God*, That He whom the *Heaven of Heavens* cannot contain, should vouchsafe to take up his residence in such narrow Rooms as our *Hearts*, and make up an *Habitation* to himself through his Spirit, *Eph. 2. 22.*

And further, it also minds us of our *Duty*, so to carry and behave our selves as fit *Temples* of the *Holy Ghost* to reside in, and to be continually offering up of *Sacrifices of praises* unto him. And so now I have done briefly with the *First General Part* of the Text, which is the *Supposition* in these words, *If the Spirit of him, that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you.*

The *Second*, which is chiefly and principally considerable of us is the *Inference*, in these, *He that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal Bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you*: Which passage is again considerable of us two manner of waies, *First*, of all in its *simple and absolute representation*, *Secondly*, in its *Conditional and connexive*. The *simple and absolute view* of it, does exhibit thus much unto us, That *He that raised up Jesus Christ from the Dead*, He will also quicken and raise up us, who are *Members of Him*. The *Conditional and Connexive view* of it, does represent thus much unto us, That he will do it upon the *premised supposition* of his Spirit dwelling in us, *If, &c.*

First, To look upon this passage, in its *simple and absolute Consideration*, *He that raised up Jesus Christ from the Dead, will also quicken and raise up us, who are, &c.* And here again two things more: *First*, The

state or condition it self, which is here propounded : And that is, the Resurrection of the Saints, and true Believers, *He shall quicken your mortal Bodies.* Secondly, The conveyance of this State or Condition unto them, or the Grace of conferring it upon them, By, or Because of *his Spirit which dwelleth in you.*

First, To speak of the *Former*, viz. The State or Condition it self, which is here propounded : And that is the Resurrection of the Saints. He shall quicken *your mortal Bodies*, that is, he shall raise you from *Death to Life.* This is *one* thing, which is here considerable of us : And it is another *Grand Article* of our *Christian Faith*, which is therefore to be taken notice of by us. The Scripture is very large in it, in sundry places of it, especially in that famous Chapter of *1 Cor. 15.* which is an excellent Explication, and Determination of this Doctrine to us. It is that which hath been set forth unto us, and shaddowed under sundry resemblances, Of *Aaron's dry Rod* budding forth, and flourishing. Of *Jonas's* three daies, and three nights in the *whales belly*, and after that delivered out of it. Of the Prophet slain by the *Lion*, but not devoured. Of *Enoch's* Translation. Of *Elijah's* rapture. Of *Elisba's Sepulchre* reviving a Dead man that was cast into it. And confirmed by the examples of *Lazarus* ; the *widows Son at Nain*, and many of the *Dead Bodies* which rose out of their Graves, and appeared unto many after the Resurrection of Christ, as we have it declared unto us in *Mat. 27. 53.*

And it is very suitable and agreeable to *Reason* rightly qualified, though it does *not depend* upon it. To *Reason* that it *may* be so, in regard of the *Possibility* of it : And to *Reason* that it *should* be so, in regard of the *Equity* of it : And to *Reason* that it *must* be so, in regard of the *Necessity* of it. In all these Considerations very suitable, and agreeable to *Reason.*

First, To *Reason* that it *may* be so, in regard of the *Possibility.* It is no way opposite or repugnant to *this.* If there were in it any repugnancy at all, it might seem especially to be this, That there is such a *wonderful Corruption* of *Bodies*, as by turning them into *Dust and Ashes*, and the *different disposing* of them. But against this, let us set and oppose the *Almighty Power* of *God*, and then we shall be very easily and *quickly satisfied* about it. Let us consider, what our *Bodies* were made of, and fetcht out of at first, and then it will be no difficulty at all. He that thoroughly believes the *Creation*, need never to doubt of the *Resurrection.* Could God make the *Body* out of the *Dust* ? and cannot he then restore it *from* the *Dust* ? Could he make it *Originally* out of nothing ? and cannot he at last make it *new* out of *something* ? Yea, and that also notwithstanding so many *intricacies and difficulties* in it ? Why should it be thought an *incredible* thing with you, that God should raise the *Dead* ; as *St. Paul* speaks to King *Agrippa*, *Act. 26. 8.*

Especially, when we shall further consider what is continually done in *Nature* ; In the *Corn* Dead in the *Ground*, which comes up *alive* ; and in *Worms*, which in *Winter* have lien *dead*, and in *Summer* come to life again. And such things as these are. Thus it holds, in regard of the *Possibility* of it, as very agreeable to *Reason*, so as that which *may* be.

Secondly, It is so also in the *Equity* of it, as that which *should* be. That so there may be an execution of the just Judgement of God, upon either part of man, which hath done either *evil or good* ; that as to the *one*, it may rise to *Glory and Happiness* ; and in the other it may rise to *ignominy and contempt.*

Thirdly;

Thirdly, It is so also in the necessity of it, as that which *must* be, and here are *drivers* and *sundry* things considerable of us, as very much making for it.

First, From the *Covenant of Grace*; I will be *thy God*, &c. Now to be our *God*, is to be the God of our *whole Persons*; not only of our *Souls*, but of our *Bodies* too. This was the Argument of our *blessed Saviour* himself, which he uses to the *Sadduces*, who deny the Resurrection, in *Mat. 22. 32*. I am the God of *Abraham*, the God of *Isaac*, and the God of *Jacob*; God is not the God of the *Dead*, but of the *Living*; that is, not only of them considered as *Dead*, and in *statu separato*; but also of them considered as *Living*, and in *statu conjuncto*: which does therefore infer re-union and conjunction of the *Bodies* with them. But,

Secondly, From the work of *Redemption*, which extends to the *Destroying* of *Death* as the last Enemy; and to get the conquest and victory over *that*. Now this is not done, except the *Body* shall *rise again*: waiting for the *Adoption*, to wit, the *Redemption of the Body*, *Rom. 8. 23*.

Thirdly, From the *Resurrection of Christ himself*: He is risen in his *Body*, therefore we also shall rise in *ours*. This is imply'd in the Text, He that raised up *Christ* from the *Dead*, shall quicken your mortal *Bodies*, &c. And it follows by very good consequence from our Relation to him, in that He is the *Head*, and we are the *Members*. What ever hath happened to *Christ afore us*, the same shall also happen to *us* in due time, in conformity to him. He is dead and risen, and ascended, and so shall we also, *Phil. 3. 21*. Who shall change our *vile Body*, that it may be made like to his *glorious Body*, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself. He that *can* do the one, can do the other: And he that *has* done the one, will do the other. And so the *Scripture* also elsewhere assures us, *1 Cor. 6. 14*. God hath both raised up the *Lord*, and will also raise up *us* by his own power; and *2 Cor. 4. 14*. Knowing that he, who raised up the *Lord Jesus*, shall also raise up *us* by *Jesus*, and present us with you.

Fourthly, From the work of the *Spirit*. The *Spirit of God*, which is in us, he does certify and assure us hereof: Namely, by these *gracious effects* of his wrought in our *Souls*; whiles he raises us from the *death of sin*, he will also raise us from the *death of the Grave*. He that hath done the one, he is ready also to do the other for us. Hence is the *Spirit of God* call'd the *earnest* and pledge hereof unto us, *2 Cor. 5. 5*. He that hath wrought us for the self same thing is *God*, who hath also given us the *earnest of the Spirit*. By *Regeneration* we are *inaugurated* unto our *Resurrection*: as *Tertullian* expresses it. The *Spirit of God* *sanctifying* us, is an *argument and evidence* to us of our *rising again*. And that by virtue of *Christ's Resurrection*, which is the *Fountain of Regeneration* to us. According to that of the *Apostle Peter*, *1 Pet. 1. 3*. Who hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the *Resurrection of Jesus Christ* from the *Dead*: to an *Inheritance*, &c.

And then further, not only from the *Spirit sanctifying*: but from the *Spirit exerting* and stirring up *gracious* and *heavenly motions*, and desires in us. Every *natural* desire does imply the *Being* of that thing, which is desired; much more every *spiritual* one especially. Now for *this* (saies the *Apostle*, speaking of himself, and other *Christians*) *do we desire to be clothed upon, with our House which is from Heaven; that so mortality might be swallowed up of Life*; *2 Cor. 5. 24*.

The

The Use of this is comfort against Death : the scope of the Text, as Job, *I know that my Redeemer lives.*

This Doctrine of the *Resurrection*, is more particularly considerable of us in the *expression*, which is here in the Text fastened upon it, whilst it is said, that *He that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal Bodies.* And here again two things more: *First*, The cause of our Resurrection. And *Secondly*, The carriage of it. The cause of it; that's in those words, *He that raised up Christ from the Dead*: The carriage of it, that's in these, *shall quicken your mortal Bodies.*

First, To speak of the cause of it, *He that raised up Christ from the Dead*; where the Resurrection of *Christians* seems to be made an effect, and consequent of the Resurrection of *Christ*. And so indeed it is: and that according to a threefold Influence: *First*, of *Merit*. *Secondly*, of *Actual Efficacy*. And *Thirdly*, of *Example*.

First, Of *Merit*: *Christ* hath by his Death, and Sufferings, and Victory merited, and purchased a blessed and glorious *Resurrection* for all those that belong unto him. Hence he is said to have risen for our *Justification*: And whom he hath *Justified*, he hath *Glorified*, Rom. 8. 30. And that we are now saved by the Resurrection of *Jesus Christ*, who is gone into Heaven, and is on the right hand of God, 1 Pet. 3. 22. That he hath swallowed up *Death into Victory*: as whereby we might be made Heirs of *Eternal Life*.

Secondly, By way of *Efficiency*, or *Actual Efficacy*: *Christ's Resurrection* is the Cause of ours. So Job. 5. 28. The *Dead in their Graves* shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear it shall Live. And 2 Cor. 15. 20. *Christ* is risen from the Dead, and is become the first fruits of them that sleep. Look as the first fruits in the Law derived a blessing to all the rest; so *Christ's Resurrection* gives a special Efficacy to ours.

Thirdly, By way of *Example*. Hence we are said to be planted into the likeness of his Resurrection, Rom. 6. 5. And as we have born the Image of the *Earthy*, or first *Adam*, so also to bear the Image of the *Heavenly*, or second *Adam*, 2 Cor. 15. 49. And to have our *vile Bodies* made conformable to his glorious *Body*, Phil. 3. 21.

The Ground and Reason of all is this, Because *Christ* is the Root and Head of all Believers, as *Adam* was of all mankind. This is plainly signified by the Apostle *Paul*, 1 Cor. 15. 21, 22. For as by *man* came death; by *man* came also the Resurrection of the dead. For as in *Adam* all die; even so in *Christ* shall all be made alive: All, that is, all the faithful, and such as belong to *Christ*, according to that which follows in the Verse next adjoining, But every man in his own order, *Christ* the first fruits; afterwards, they that are *Christ's* at his coming: where the benefit of *Christ's Resurrection* is fastened upon the Members of *Christ*. And again, in Verse 45. The first man *Adam* was made a living Soul; the last *Adam* was made a quickening Spirit. And upon the same account is he also called the first begotten from the Dead, Col. 1. 18.

This for the Use of it makes much for the comfort of the children of God, and that in two particulars: *First*, as I noted before, as it does assure us of our Resurrection: seeing we are raised by the Resurrection of *Christ*, therefore we are sure to rise without question, because that he is risen already, in the actual accomplishment. He that hath raised up him, will not fail to raise up

up us also by the same power, as in the place before cited, 1 Cor. 6. 14. If Christ be Preached that he rose from the Dead, how can any say, that there is no Resurrection of the Dead? 1 Cor. 15. 12.

Secondly, We are hereby assured also of our Resurrection to *Eternal Life*: For rising by the same power, we shall likewise rise to the same purpose. And he that hath raised up the Lord Jesus, will raise up us also by Jesus, as again in the place before alledg'd. Because the Members shall be made partakes of the same condition with their Head. And so much may be spoken of the first particular which is here considerable of us, and that is, the cause of our Reurrection: in these words, *He that raised up Christ from the Dead.*

The Second, Is the carriage of it in these, *shall quicken your mortal Bodies.* That which we here read our mortal Bodies, is by the Syriack and Arabick Interpreters, rendred our dead bodies; but they come both to one and the same effect; and if there be any difference of advantage between them, this of mortal carries it from that of dead: It being a greater matter to be delivered from mortality, than it is simply to be delivered from death; as it is more to be delivered from a general sinful nature, than it is to be delivered from some particular actual sin. Now the Resurrection it does effect this. It plucks up the very root, it eats out the very core and heart of Death in us; so that it shall never have any more prevalency, or dominion over us: Death is swallowed up with Victory, and mortality is swallowed up of Life, as the Scripture elsewhere expresses it. This is further considerable in the word which is here used in the Text, *quicken*, He shall quicken: that is, not only bestow a simple Life upon them, which is agreeable also to the wicked in another world; but a Life excluding all possibility of Dying, and totally freeing us, and exempting us from the Law of Death, which the damned by vertue of their Resurrection are not freed from: For though it is true they do not die again; yet because they do continually suffer after Death, they are so far forth said to die; in which respect they are said in Scripture to be subject to the second death. But now this quickening of the Spirit, which is vouchsafed to the members of Christ, it does exclude not only death, but suffering, in any way or kind whatsoever: Death not only in act, but in power: And all such evils, and infirmities, and sicknesses, and miseries, as do either make way for it, or attend upon it. God shall wipe away all tears from his peoples eyes, and there shall be no more death: No, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain; as it is in Rev. 21. 4. Our Bodies by vertue of the Resurrection shall become both immortal, and impassible; and immortal so far forth as mortality shall be wholly removed, and taken away from them.

This now is a very great difference betwixt the state of recovery, and the state of innocency; betwixt the happiness which we have now by Christ, above the happiness which we had once in Adam, before our Fall: For in Adam, in the state of Innocency, we were only so far forth immortal, as it was possible for us not to have died; but now by Christ in the state of Redemption, and so consequently in the state of Glory, it is not possible for us that we should die: But the very root of Death is stub'd up and destroyed in us. He shall quicken our mortal bodies, by making them absolutely immortal. And so now I have done with the first Branch, in this second general, to wit, the state or condition it self, which is here propounded: And that is, the

the Resurrection of the Saints, and true Believers, in their words, *He that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall quicken your mortal Bodies.*

The *Second*, Is the conveyance of this state and condition *unto them*, or the ground of conferring it *upon them*, in these words, *By or because of his Spirit that*, &c. I read it both waies, either *by or because*, according to the different Translation, in the *Text*, and in the *Margent*: and each of them different, according to different Copies in the *original*. The *Textual* Translation, that renders it *by*, according to that Copy in the *Greek*, which reads it *διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος*. The *Marginal* Translation, that renders it *because*, according to that Copy in the *Greek*, which reads it *διὰ τοῦ ὅτι*. We may, if we please, take it either way.

First, Take it in the *Textual* Translation: *By his Spirit that dwelleth in you*. Where we see how the dwelling of Gods Spirit in the children of God, is the means, and cause, and conveyance of Resurrection to such as are his Children. *They rise*, but they rise by the *virtue* of the Spirit of God, that dwells in them. And that because they rise in reference to their Relation to *Christ*, as we shewed before. The Resurrection of Believers is founded in the Resurrection of *Christ*, who is the *Head* of them, so that because *he is risen*, they must needs rise also as parts of him: nay in that respect are said to be risen already, *Eph. 2. 6. He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ*. Well, but how do they come to be thus parts and members of him, and to have relation to him? This is no other way, than by the *Spirit*, which does knit and unite them together: *For if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*, as it is in the ninth Verse of this Chapter.

But *Secondly*, We may, if we please, take it also in the *Marginal* Translation, which is *for*, or because of the *Spirit that dwelleth in you*: as denoting not only the cause *from* which, but also the reason *for* which this Resurrection is conferred upon them. And here again there are two things more which are considerable of us: *First* of all, somewhat which is *imply'd*; and *Secondly*, somewhat which is *inferred*. That which is *imply'd*, is this: *That the Spirit of God dwelleth in the children of God*. That which is *inferred*, is this: *That because and in regard of his Spirit dwelling in them, therefore they shall rise again, and have their Bodies restored unto them, with Life put into them*.

First, I say, Here is that which is *imply'd*: *That the Spirit of God dwells in the children of God*. This is a point which we have had already once or twice before out of the *former* words: But yet now here in this place, we have somewhat more signified to us than we had *then* exhibited: For there we had only signified to us the Inhabitation of Gods Spirit, in his Children, either considered at *large*, and in *general*, as to *their whole Persons*, or else with more particular and restrained respect to their *Souls*: But here now in these words before us, we have signified the Inhabitation of Gods Spirit in his Children, in reference to *their bodies*, and that not only *whilst living*, and having their Souls *joyned* unto them: but also *whiles dead*, and having their Souls *separated* from them. *He that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall quicken your dead Bodies, by his Spirit which dwells in you, even dead*. So that from hence we may observe thus much, That the Bodies of the Saints, *even whiles they are dead*, and lying in the Grave, they are still the

the Temples of the *Holy Ghost*. The Spirit of God does still lay a special claim and title unto them, and challenges an Interest in them.

This must needs be so, upon this account : *First*, Because the Relations of God to his People are *unchangeable Relations*, and such as nothing is able to separate them, or divide betwixt them, not death it self : And therefore the Apostle saies, that *even when we die, we are the Lords*, Rom. 14. 8. The *Lords*, and in our whole *Persons*, not only in our *Souls*, but in our *Bodies*, which are still his likeness, and his *Spirit* hath still a right in them as Temples yet appropriated, and belonging unto him; and taken up, and possessed by him.

Secondly, They are still the members of Christ, therefore they are still also the Temples of the *Holy Ghost*. The Apostle joyns them both together in one and the same Scripture, 1 Cor. c. 6. Therefore having said in the 15. Verse : *Know ye not that your Bodies are the Members of Christ* ? He presently adds in the 19. Verse, *Know ye not that your Bodies are the Temples of the Holy Ghost* : The latter following from the former, and consequent upon it.

Thirdly, From the *Analogy* betwixt the *Personal Union*, and the *Mystical*. As to the *Personal* and *Hypothetical Union* of the *Godhead* in Christ and the *manhood* ; there was never any *division* or *separation* of the one from the other, after that they were once knit and united together, *Quod semel assumpsit nunquam deposuit*. Even the *Body of Christ*, when it was in the Grave, and had its *Soul* separated from it ; yet it was still united to the second *Person in the Trinity*. Even so also the *Bodies of Believers*, when they are lying in the Grave likewise, and have their *Souls* separated from them, they do still retain their *Union*, and relation to the *Spirit of God* ; which as it dwelt in them, then when they were living ; so does also dwell in them still, when they are dead, and retains his proper right, and possession of them.

The Use of this Point to our selves is not from hence with the *Papists*, to adore the Reliques of the Saints, and to give religious Worship unto them, which is superstitious and abominable: But

First, This makes for the comely, and decent burial, and interment of them. There are grounds for the Burial of the Dead, even upon Common and Civil Considerations ; which even the *Heathen* had a respect unto. But there are further grounds for it upon *Religious*, and such as do belong to *Christians* after a special and peculiar manner : whereof this is one amongst the rest, which we are now upon, in that the *Bodies of the Saints*, as they are still the *Members of Christ*, so they are still also the Temples of the *Holy Ghost*.

Secondly, It makes against all injurious handling of them, and violence offer'd unto them, and ignominy cast upon them. This is that which the *Psalmist* complains of, in *Psalm* 79. 1. *Thy holy Temple have they defiled*, which is true not only of the *material Temple*, but of the *mystical* ; according to that which follows presently after in the second Verse, *The dead Bodies of thy Servants, have they given to be meat unto the Fowls of the Heaven. The Flesh of thy Saints unto the Beasts of the Earth*. And *Rev.* 11. 9. It is said of the *two witnesses*, that they should not suffer their dead Bodies to be put into their Graves. Well, but let them take heed what they do, who are at any time guilty of such Barbarousness as this is : For what wrong they do in this kind, to the Bodies of such kind of Persons, they do it in conclusion, even to no less than the *holy Ghost* himself, whose Temples and properties these are : And such as are so far guilty, they shall not go unpunished. Ac-

cording to that of the Apostle; 1 Cor. 3. 16, 17. *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile or destroy the Temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are.*

Thirdly, Here is that which takes also from the fear of death, and the horror of the Grave; in Worms, and Rottenness, and Putrefaction, and Dispersion, and the like; what ever reluctancy there may be against such things as these are, it is qualified from this *Consideration* which we have now before us, of the continued interest, which the Holy Ghost himself hath in the Bodies of those who are Believers; which he takes a special care of, and hath a special respect unto, in such conditions. As their *Death is precious* with him, so is also their *Dust*, which he favours and takes pleasure in: and will one day fully recollect and gather together. This is more than all the stately Sepulchres, and Monuments, and repositories which the men of the world do commonly so much glory of, and please themselves in. The *Dignity* of their Relation, takes off from the *Indignity* of their condition. And so much may be spoken of the Point, which is here imply'd, That the Spirit of God dwells in Christians: not only as to their *Souls*, but as to their *Bodies*: Not only as *living*, but *dead*.

The *Second*, Is that which is *inferred*, That because and in regard of the Spirit of God dwelling in them, therefore their Bodies should be raised, and restored again to *Life*. This follows from hence, because the Holy Ghost will not quit his own Interest, nor lose any thing of that which belongs unto him, which he should do if the Bodies of the Saints lay still in their Graves, or were wholly annihilated, and brought to nothing. And so now I have done with this second General Part of the Text, in the *first representation* of it: namely as *simple and absolute*. *He that, &c. shall quicken, &c.*

The *Second* is *Conditional*, or Connexive with the words which went before in the beginning of the Verse, *If the Spirit of him that raised up, &c.* Where Resurrection to Eternal Life is made dependant upon the Inhabitation of the holy Ghost in such Persons as shall so rise. Those whose *Souls* the Spirit of God hath quickened with a *Spiritual* life, these mens Bodies shall the same Spirit quicken also in reference to a *glorious*: and those *alone*. The sum of the Point is this, That however the *Resurrection of the Body*, considered in the thing it self, be a business *absolute and determin'd*: Yet the Resurrection to *glory*, which is the Doctrine here spoken of in the Text, it is *Hypothetical and conditional*, and is not vouchsafed to any persons, but upon the *antecedent work* of Grace and Sanctification wrought in their hearts, and the Spirit of God dwelling in their persons: *If the Spirit of God dwell in you*, and not else, *shall all the same Spirit quicken you*, &c. Thus it hath both a *Positive* Emphasis with it, and an *Exclusive*; a *Positive* Emphasis, as giving this Resurrection to the *Temples of the Holy Ghost*; An *Exclusive* Emphasis, as denying it to *all others*, which are not of their Number. It is *Regeneration*, which does only intitle us to *Resurrection*, in that *notion* of Resurrection, as is indeed *desireable* of us, and beneficial, and advantageous to us. Therefore it is called Emphatically the *Resurrection of the Just*, in Luk. 14. 14. And these two are joyned together, as belonging one to the other, *The children of God, and the children of the Resurrection*, Luk. 20. 36. Hence it is that the *Resurrection is made a matter of Hope*, by the Apostle Paul, *Act. 23. 6. Of the*

the Hope, and Resurrection of the dead, am I this day called in question : As likewise a matter of *Indeavour*, If by any means I might attain unto the Resurrection of the Dead, Phil. 3. 11.

The Consideration of this Point may be useful to us, to a twofold purpose : *First*, as matter of comfort to the Saints and Servants of God, who finding in themselves the *first fruits* of the Spirit in Grace and Holiness here; may assure themselves of the full accomplishment of it in glory and happiness hereafter, and being risen from the *death of sin*, they shall rise to the *life of Christ*, and be for ever with him in *Bliss*, when *Christ who is their Life* shall appear, they also shall appear with him in *Glory*, Col. 3. 4.

Secondly, Here is matter of *Terror* to all wicked and reprobate Persons, in whom *Satan* does dwell and abide, the *Spirit* that rules and works in the Children of disobedience. That however, they shall be sure to rise also at the *last Day* : yet this rising of theirs, it shall be no *benefit*, or *advantage* to them at all, but rather the *contrary* : In regard of the *different Dispensation* of it, from that of the *children of God*.

First, As to the *manner* of it. Whereof the *one* shall be with *rejoicing* ; the other with *horror* : As in them waking out of ordinary sleep ; there are some that wake with a great deal of trembling, whiles others wake with a great deal of cheerfulness, and freedom of Spirit.

Secondly, In regard of the *End* of it. The *Godly*, they rise, that they may receive their *Crown and Garland*. But the *wicked*, they rise, that they may receive their punishment and torment. As *Pharaoh's Butler*, and *Baker* : the one lifted up in a way of *Exaltation* ; the other in a way of *Exécution*. This later, is such a Rising, as is worse than no Rising at all ; better to lie in Prison still, than out of the Prison to be brought to the Gallows : this is the state of wicked men in their Resurrection.

Thirdly and *Lastly*, In regard of the *cause* and *proceeding* of it. The *Godly*, they rise by virtue of their *Union with Christ*, as his *Members* ; and by virtue of their Relation to the *Holy Ghost*, as his *Temples* : But the wicked, they rise by virtue of Gods Curse upon them, and designation to everlasting destruction. The *Godly*, they rise by the power of Christ as a *Mediator* ; the wicked, they rise by the power of Christ as a *Judge*. The Resurrection of the *Godly*, is a fruit of Gods promise in the Gospel, *The Seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the Serpent* : But the Resurrection of the wicked, is the consequent of Gods Curse threatned in the Law, *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*, that is, shalt be adjudged to Eternal woe, and destruction : But if the Spirit, &c.

S E R M O N X I V.

ROMANS 8. 12.

*Therefore Brethren, we are Debtors not to the Flesh ;
to live after the Flesh.*

Every Mercy and Favour, which we do at any time partake of from God, it makes us to be so much the more engaged, and indebted unto him, and sets us on the score with him. Therefore it is the usual manner of the Holy Ghost, still in Scripture, to reason from a benefit to a duty : and to enforce the practice, and cheerfulness of our obedience, from the Consideration of his goodness. This is that which we may observe more especially in this Text which we have now before us. Where the Apostle having in the words preceeding, shewn the great privilege of Christians, as being not in the Flesh, but in the Spirit ; as having the Spirit of God dwelling in them ; and this Spirit not only sanctifying, and enlivening their Souls for the present, but also raising and quickening of their Bodies for time to come ; furnishing of them with Grace here, and filling of them with glory hereafter : does from hence infer their ingagement to the leading of an holy Life and Conversation answerable thereunto, whiles they are here in the world : Therefore Brethren we are Debtors, not to the Flesh ; to live after the Flesh, &c.

IN the Text it self, there are two General Parts considerable : First, the Negative Inference, as that which is *express* ; And secondly, the Positive Inference, as that which is *imply'd*. The Negative Inference, and that which is *express*, is, *That we are not Debtors to the Flesh ; to live after the Flesh.* The Positive Inference, and that which is *imply'd* is, *That we are Debtors to the Spirit ; to live after the Spirit.*

We begin with the first of these parts, as that which is *express* : *That we are not Debtors to the Flesh.* Christians and true Believers, such as the Apostle himself was, and divers also of those whom the Apostle here writes unto ; they are nothing at all to the service, or satisfaction of the Flesh : This is the Point which lies here before us. For the better opening of this present Point unto us, the word *Flesh* may be taken two manner of waies : either in the Physical sense, or in the Moral : Either for that part of man, which is properly so call'd, the *Body* : Or for the *unregenerate, and unsanctified part*, which is *sin* and Corruption. Now the former of these is not so much understood in this place, as rather the latter. Indeed, as to the former, St. Chrysostom has very well observ'd, and there is a truth in it : That there

is a Debt which every man in a *sense* does owe unto it. We may be said to be Debtors to the Flesh, that is, to our Bodies in sundry regards: as to feed them, and to cloath them, and to nourish them, and to provide for them; No man ever yet hated his own Flesh, saies the Apostle, *Eph. 5. 29*. We are Debtors in this Notion to our Flesh. And there are some kind of people in the world, which are scandalously Debtors to it: As for example, your Misers and Muck-worms, and Caytiffs, which pinch and streighten themselves, even where God has enlarg'd them; live poor, that they may die rich; die, as we say, to save charges, and deny themselves necessities, as to their outward and bodily subsistence; such persons as these are, they are with a witness Debtors to their Flesh: and that more than they should be.

And so likewise not only your Covetous, but your Superstitious Persons likewise, which needlessly, and out of a conceit of merit, and supererogation do oftentimes macerate their Flesh, and put a piece of Religion in abstaining from such kind of meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them that believe and know the truth, as it is in *1 Tim. 4. 2*. Such things as these they have indeed in them a shew of wisdom, in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the Body, not in any manner, to the satisfying of the Flesh, as the Apostle speaks, *Col. 2. 23*. The denial of the Flesh, in this sense, is the withholding of a Debt from it which is due unto it. Not only as the Body is considerable, as part of our selves, but likewise as it is a Member of Christ, and a Temple of the Holy Ghost, as we have formerly heard, and besides an helper, and companion of the Soul in holy Duties; we are thus far debtors to the Flesh, in this sense, as we may so express it.

Indeed, as to the pampering, and inordinate setting out of our Bodies: So we are not Debtors unto them. It is that which a great many people are sometimes guilty of: which spend the greatest part of their time in looking to their outward man, and providing for that; how to Feed, and to Gloath their Bodies, and to cherish their flesh: But this is not that which does chiefly lie upon a Christian. He is one that owes his flesh no such special or extraordinary service as this is.

And the Reason hereof is taken from the Nature and Condition of the Body, considered in it self, which as it is stiled in the Verse before, is corruptible and mortal, and in another place, a vile Body. Now being so, there is so much the less care to be had about it; our care being especially due to be bestowed there, where the dignity is greater of those things which it is bestowed upon.

And then besides, the great impediments which it does cause, and contract to the Soul, from the inordinate serving of it, whereby it is made so much the more unfit for the Duties and exercises of Religion and mortification, and such things as these. And thus much of the word Flesh, as it may be taken in its Physical Consideration, so far forth as it does denote the Body, or outward man.

The Second, is by taking it in the Moral. The flesh, that is, sin and corruption: And so it seems principally to be understood here in this place. Christians, they are by no means debtors to the satisfying and fulfilling of their lusts: This is the Point, which is here mainly intended in this present expression, when it is said, That we are not debtors to the flesh, to live after the

the flesh; and it is agreeable to other Scriptures, as *Rom. 13. 14. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof. Gal. 5. 16. walk in the Spirit, and fulfill not the lusts of the flesh. 1 Pet. 2. 11. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as Pilgrims, and Strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts.* These and the like Exhortations we meet withal in Scripture to this purpose, and the Equity of it will appear in these respects.

First, We are not debtors to the flesh, nor have any cause to do service to that, because we have received no answerable benefit from it. A Debt, it is upon Consideration: and does usually, and for the most part imply some benefit received. He that owes any thing to another, is supposed to have something from him, in lieu of that which he owes him, or else it is void. Now this we have not had from the flesh in any kind whatsoever. We never got a farthing by sin, any of us, in all our lives. We never got any thing from it, which might be a ground, or motive to us for our serving of it, or ingagement to it: what fruit had ye then in those things, whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of these things is death, saies the Apostle, Rom. 6. 21. All that we get by sin, is nothing but shame and loss. Therefore it is not we that are Debtors to it, but it is it indeed rather that is a Debtor to us, in all those fair promises, which it hath sometime made unto us, whilst it has performed none. Sin in the first appearance and presentment of it self to our minds, seems to promise us great matters; but in conclusion it fails us of our hopes and expectations. Men do not think themselves debtors there where they are cheated, and cozened, and deceived. Why, thus are we in our dealings with sin? It does nothing but put so many tricks and wiles upon us: And accordingly called in Scripture the deceitfulness of sin. Therefore are we, by no means, ingaged, or indebted to it: as gaining nothing at all from it. The flesh profiteth nothing.

Secondly, As we are not Debtors by Receipt, so neither are we Debtors by Promise. That's another way sometimes of coming into debt. Though a man have nothing which he hath received from another, yet if he hath promised him, and bound himself to him, he becomes a Debtor to him notwithstanding. It is that whereby God himself becomes a Debtor to us, it is not by Receipt, but by Covenant, as he has made himself so by his promise, who were otherwise free from us. Yea, but now we are not debtors to the flesh so much as thus. There is no man that's a true Believer, and that has given up his name to Christ, who has made any promise to sin, for the pleasing and gratifying of it in any particular. What do we talk of promising to it, when he has oftentimes vowed against it, and promised oftentimes to the contrary? In his first vow in Baptism; in his renewal of it at the Lords Table, in many occasional vows and promises, which he has made in sickness, and times of distress, wherein he has renounced it, and abjured it, and deked it, and most solemnly protested against it. But there's not the least scrap of any ingagement to it: There's no tie at all upon you, you are not debtors to neither.

Thirdly, There are too many of us who are (as I may say) afore-hand with the Flesh, in the daies of vanity and un-conversion, therefore not debtors to it. If ever they owed any thing to it, they have payed it over and over again, and more than enough. This is that which the Apostle Peter tells us in 1 Pet. 4. 3. The time past of our life may suffice us to have

have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, and abominable idolatries. Thus it has been with many persons, before it hath pleased God to bring them home to himself, mispending their precious time, and strength, and the least share of their lives in the waies of sin, and extravagancy: Therefore they are not debtors to the Flesh, when brought home and converted.

Fourthly, We are not Debtors to the Flesh, because the Flesh and we are at absolute enmity, and opposition one to another: *we have killed, and Crucified the flesh, as many of us, as belong to Christ, therefore we are no longer debtors to it*, Gal. 5. 24. *They that are Christs, have Crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.* Now therefore we are not to conceive, as if we owed any thing to it. This, though it holds not in *Civil* matters, yet in *Spirituals* it holds very well: That we should not serve or comply with the Flesh, which we have *professed enmity* withal. We do all we can to *spoil it*, and it becomes us so to do: therefore we are not to give or pay any thing to it. As it is sometimes also in other matters. There is no man that counts himself a Debtor to that person, whom he is bound to *plunder*: As it was with the *Israelites*, in respect of the *Egyptians*, who though they borrowed Jewels of them, yet they did not think themselves debtors to them, because even by Gods own appointment, and Commandment, they were required to *spoil* them. Why, thus it is now with us, in regard of the *flesh*: It concerns us all we can to *spoil* it, and to *divest* it of that which it has, therefore we are not to think that we should owe any thing to it.

Fifthly, We are absolutely freed, and discharged from the exactions of it. It has no part or share in us, nor nothing at all to do with us, therefore we are not debtors to it, Rom. 6. 28. *Being then made free from sin, ye become the servants of righteousness.* Those who are regenerate and born again, they are made free from sin, and so nothing ingaged to the services of it. This they are by the Death and sufferings of Christ, which hath purchast this freedom for them; as ye may see in 1 Pet. 4. 1. *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm your selves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin; that he should no longer live the rest of his time, in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but the will of God;* So likewise in the first Chapter of that Epistle, Vers. 18; 19. *Ye were redeemed from your vain conversation by the precious blood of Jesus Christ: as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot. He hath graciously taken us off from our thralldom, and engagement to sin; so that now we are neither Debtors for it, nor Debtors to it.* Christ himself has quit the scores.

Sixthly and *Lastly*, We are not debtors to the flesh, because the flesh is not a warrantable Creditor for any to be indebted unto. It hath no power committed unto it, for the receiving of any thing from us, neither is there any thing due unto it. There where there is nothing due, there is no man can be said to be a Debtor. Now for the flesh, the Case is thus with it: It is a Cheater, and an Usurper, and an Oppressor. It calls for, and exacts that whereunto it has no right: And whatsoever is paid, it is more than in Justice and Equity does belong unto it. Sin, it is not capable of any League or Contract at all to be made with it. Indeed there are some kind of persons, who now and then *de facto*, do make it; but *de jure*, there is no ground for it. It is that, which will not hold in Law, as I may so express it. All the

the *engagements*, which men tie themselves in, in reference to sin and the flesh, they are *ipso facto* void, and of *no force, or validity* at all, in regard of the *foundation* of them. Thus we see in all these respects, how we are no way Debtors hereunto, as is here declared.

The Consideration of this Point (for the *Use* of it to our selves) serves to this purpose: *First*, to discover to us the *sad and miserable* condition of all such persons, as are out of *Christ*; who (on the contrary) are through their own default, and voluntary miscarriage, become Debtors to the most cruel and severe Creditor in the world. There is no man so deeply engaged, as that man who is in thralldom to his *lusts*; and he has all the *qualifications* and properties of a sad Debtor upon him, while he remains and continues in that estate.

First, He is a *Servant* to it: This is the property of a *Debtor*: The *Borrower* is a *Servant* to the *Lender*, as *Solomon* speaks. He that committeth sin, is the *Servant* of sin, so saies our Saviour. Why, thus now is every carnal and unregenerate person to his Lusts. He is a slave and servant to them, and they lead him whither they please. There is nothing, which they can desire of him, but he is ready presently to grant it, and yield it to them. And what a wretchedness and misery is this, if it be duly considered? A man had better be in debt to the greatest *Exactor*, and *Oppressor* in the world, than to be in thralldom to his own *Lusts*, which will never be satisfied or contented, but like the *Horseleech*, cry *Give, give*, upon every occasion, which are *alwaies at hand*, and *by him*, and *near unto him*, and continually *with him*; and so ever and anon *dogging* and *dunning* of him, and never letting him alone to take any rest.

Besides, that they seldom come *single*, but have many others attending upon them, and joyn'd unto them. As he, which is a *Creditor*, he expects to have his Debtor at his beck upon every turn, and to have many courtesies besides in the interim, before the payment of the Debt it self; Even so will sin also of those, who are engaged and indebted to that. He that is a Debtor to one Lust, he shall be a slave to many more with it, which will engage him occasionally from it. Thus he who is a Debtor to *Ambition*, and *Pride*, and vain glory in the world; he is a Debtor occasionally to *flattery*, and *flattery*, and *sinful correspondencies*, for the promoting of such ends to himself. He that's a Debtor to *Covetousness*, he is a Debtor consequently to *Cozenage*, and *Fraud*, and *Oppression*, and such causes as these for the satisfying of that *humour* in him. And he that's a Debtor to *wantonness*, and *lasciviousness*, and *drunkenness*, and *intemperance*, and the like: he is a Debtor also to other sins, which have an affinity, and agreement thereunto. Thus Lust is not a *single* Debt, but involves many others besides together with it self; which is a *special misery* considerable in it.

Secondly, Another misery in a Debtor is, that he labours all for another, many times, and not for himself: He is not only a *Servant*, but a *Drudge*. Debtors, their greatest care is to discharge and to free themselves from the present engagement, which lies upon them, and to do somewhat whereby to satisfy their *Creditors*, but themselves are very little or nothing advantaged or promoted by their indeavours. Their own *Estate* is oftentimes very little furthered by it. Why, thus is it now with such a person, as makes himself to be a Debtor to his Lusts. All his care is to provide for the *flesh*, which is a *Stranger*, and an *Enemy* to him. But his own proper interest and happiness, which

which lies in *Grace and Holiness*, it goes *backward*, and is much *hindered* thereby. That man cannot thrive in *goodness*; that is so deeply engaged in *sin*; For the *one eats out the other*, and devours the very substance of it. That *time*, and strength, and pains which should be spent upon the *Spirit*, and the laying up of a *stock of Grace*, it is all expended upon the *flesh*, and the improving of *natural corruption*, to a greater height and estate. And that I say in all particulars: In Covetousness, in Wantonness, in Maliciousness, in Ambition, in Pride. Those that are addicted and given up to such affections as these are, they can have time and leisure for little else but the prosecuting and following of them; whereas in the mean time their *inward man*, it lies *wast*, and *perishes*, and *decays*; and those means which God has appointed for the *furthering and advancing thereof*, are *neglected accordingly*. Prayer, and Reading, and Hearing, and holy Communion, they are hereupon *laid aside*, and wholly *intermitted*.

Thirdly, Another inconvenience of Debtors, is *Restraint*, and want of Freedom: They have not liberty to *speak*, or to do those things which *others may*. Even so he which is a Debtor to sin, and lust, and the affections thereof; he is *straitened* in this particular. He that's a slave to sin himself, he cannot so easily reprove it in *another*, but it will be ready to reflect upon him.

Lastly, He that's a Debtor to *sin*, he is the worst kind of Debtor of *all*: because the more that he pays to it, the more he still comes in debt to a *greater Creditor*, and runs in arrears *with him*, who will be sure at last, to call him to a *most strict* account about it, and make him to pay the utmost for it. This is the misery of all such persons as are in a natural, and unregenerate condition, and out of Christ, &c.

Therefore (for a *second Use* of this Point) this should teach us especially to take heed, and beware of such a Condition. Alas! What is it for any to be quit with all the world besides, and in the mean time involv'd in their lusts; and so liable even to God himself upon that account! We should therefore (not neglecting *others*) especially labour to keep our selves out of *such* engagements.

How (may ye say) shall we do that? I'll shew you how. *First*, Have nothing to do with such *waies*, and *courses*, and *dealings*; as these are. There are some kinds of Trades in the world, that if a man will be dealing in them, he cannot possibly keep out of Debt, let him do what he can. Now such a kind of Trade and way is this course of sin. Do but *deal* in it, and once meddle with it, and it will be sure to *involve you*, and *intangle you*, do the best that you are able. Therefore it is made the property of one that is *born of God*, 1 Joh. 3. 9. *that he doth not commit sin*, that is, he doth not make a *Trade* of it. He does not make it his business to follow, or pursue any sin, though never so small: but is careful to *withdraw* himself from it: And that from the first beginnings and occasion of it: Because *he that begins*, he will be engaged still to go on.

Secondly, Labour to condemn the *pleasures and contentments of sin*. What's the Reason that many are engaged so far to the *following of their lusts*? It is because that they promise to themselves some great contentment in the pursuit of them, which they find themselves afterwards to be cozened, and disappointed of. Now therefore let men be so wise, as to think otherwise with themselves afore-hand.

Thirdly, Lay up a good stock of Grace in our own hearts against a time.

of need and temptation. What's the reason that many prove engaged to those sometimes who are inferior to them? It is because they are no more careful of improving of that which they have. It is *ill-husbandry* that brings men in Debt for the most part: And so it is also here in spiritual things more especially. If we were better *husbands of Grace*, we should be less involv'd in *sin*, than for the most part we are. And so now I have done with the *first General Part* of the Text, which is the *Negative* in that which is express'd, *We are not Debtors to the Flesh, to live after the Flesh.*

The *Second* is the *Affirmative*: as that which is *imply'd*. *But we are Debtors to the Spirit, to live after the Spirit.* This is plainly intended, as the *main scope* and drift of the Text, as we may see, if we look upon the *Coherence*; and therefore not to be omitted by us. Wherein again we may take notice of *two particulars*. *First*, The *Creditor*: The *Spirit*. *Secondly*, Our *Engagement* to him, and that is, by way of *Debt*: *we are Debtors to the Spirit.*

First, For the *Creditor*; the *Spirit*. Every Christian is a *Debtor*, that is bound and engaged to *this*. By the *Spirit* here in this place, we may understand *two things*: Either the *third Person in Trinity*, who by a special eminency is call'd the *Holy Ghost*. Or else, the *Regenerate* part of a man; in opposition to the word *Flesh*, as it is taken for *sin and corruption*, which we spake of in the Point before. We are Debtors all of us to *either* of these.

And *first* of all to speak of the *former*; as it denotes the *third Person* in Trinity, which was spoken of in the verse immediately preceeding. Every Christian that is, he is a great Debtor to him: A Debtor to the *holy Spirit*: And that in these respects.

First, As the *Beginner and worker* of all Grace in him. What ever Grace any of us have, it is the gift of the *Holy Ghost* unto us, and is of his bestowing upon us: The *Illuminating of our Minds*, and *Understandings* with Divine Truths: The *Bowing and Framing of our wills* to the embracing of them: The *ordering and regulating of our Affections*; All is from the *Spirit of God*, which is thus *active for us*. The whole *work of Sanctification*, both as to the *killing and mortifying of sin*, and to the *working and infusing of Grace*, it proceeds from the *Holy Ghost*. And are we not then *much indebted to him*, who hath given us our first *Being*, as we may say, in the *Spiritual Life*, according to that of the Apostle, *1 Cor. 6. 11.* *By the Spirit of our God.* *Pelagians*, and such kind of persons, do exceedingly take from this Truth, whiles they make mans Conversion to be dependant upon his *own Free-will*, and so thereby discharge him from that Debt which he owes to the Spirit; whiles indeed, as they would have it, he may rather thank himself than the Spirit for it.

Secondly, We are engaged to the *Spirit*; not only as the *first beginner*, but also as the *further increaser* of those Graces in us which are begun: *Not only as the Author, but as the Finisher of our Faith*, as the Scripture speaks, for so he is: *It is he that works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* And we have no further ability in us to any thing which is spiritually good, than as this Spirit is assistant to us, and co-operates with us. *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, 2 Cor. 3. 17.*

Thirdly, As our Comforter in Afflictions: *we are Debtors to the Spirit* thus,

thus, as who comforts us in all our Tribulation, and sweetly upholds our Spirits in whatsoever condition befalls us. There's none that can give us comfort like him; All others are as *Job* speaks, but miserable comforters in comparison. It is he who comforteth those that are cast down: And upon the Point He alone.

Lastly, As the continual suggerer of good thoughts unto us, and restrainer of us from evil. What a blessed advantage is it to us, to be daily and continually acted by such a Spirit as this is, that dwells in us, and resides in us, for such a purpose as this is, as we have formerly heard? And thus are we Debtors to the Spirit, as it may be taken for the Holy Spirit, the third Person in the Trinity.

But *Secondly*, We may take it as denoting the Regenerate Part in us, in reference to a Spiritual Life. And thus in this sense, are we Debtors to the Spirit also. Where we may take in the second Particular, which I propounded as considerable in this passage, to wit, our Ingagement to this Creditor, which we are ty'd unto by way of Debt. We are all of us Debtors to the Spirit, according to this Consideration, that is, we are ingaged to an holy and spiritual Course and Conversation. This is that which is here properly considerable. And it is such as may be made good unto us, in a twofold respect; First, in regard of what we have not paid already; Secondly, in regard of what we ought, and are bound to pay.

First, We are Debtors to the Spirit, that is, to the Spiritual Part in us, in regard of what we have not paid already. There's no man, who ever he be, but he is behind-hand, as I may say, to the Spirit in this respect. He has not bestowed that time, and pains, and endeavour upon his Heart, and Soul, and Spirit, as he should, and as it hath become him to do: And the better any one is, the more sensible and apprehensive is he of his defect, in this particular.

The ground of this miscarriage is this, Because men commonly lay out too much another way, in the service of Sin and Satan. Those that spend their money there where they should not, they cannot bestow it there where they should: Because they have not enough for both, to satisfy their Lusts, and to pay their debts too. This will not easily hold out: And therefore they are sometimes forced to withhold the one occasionally from the other. And thus it is here in this particular business whereof we now speak. Men are afore-hand (as I said) with the Flesh, and this makes them to be behind-hand with the Spirit. They have their secret lusts and extravagancies, which do in a manner spend upon them, and therefore they cannot so readily give their due to Grace: nor be so active for God as is required of them.

The Consideration of this Point, is matter of great Abasement and Humiliation to us, when we shall consider seriously of it. Those who profess Christianity, and the leading of a spiritual life, to think how far short they come of that life which they profess to lead: and what Debtors they are to the Spirit, in regard of a spiritual Conversation. Not only from their sins of Commission, and the doing of that which is evil, but also from their sins of Omission, and the not doing of that which is good, and which is required of them; especially if we shall take in with it the Circumstance of greater advantages and opportunities afforded unto them, and of encouragements which are bestowed upon them. Certainly such as these are highly Debtors

to the Spirit, in this respect, as to what they have not paid already.

Secondly, We are Debtors to the Spirit, in regard of what we ought and are bound to pay unto it. Every Christian, and professor of Religion is engaged to a spiritual Conversation. It is a Debt which lies upon us, to lead a Godly and holy Life: And that in sundry respects.

First, Considered as Creatures, if we take it no more but so. God hath made us for this purpose, to honour and glorify himself: And it is that which every Creature is bound to in his way and opportunity. As the other Creatures in their way, so man more especially in his. We are herein Debtors hereunto.

Secondly, As New Creatures. We are thus Debtors more especially: It being the main and principal end of our Regeneration, and our new Birth especially, that we should be fruitful in all the works of holiness, and a godly Conversation. Thus Eph. 2. 10. *we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.* Every one that hath any excellency, whatsoever it be, whether Natural or Moral, or Spiritual, or whatever we can name: he is a Debtor to the improvement of that excellency in all particulars. And so amongst the rest, this of a gracious and holy frame, and disposition of heart: *We are created in Christ Jesus to good works.* Observe, that it is not merely to have such principles in us, but to walk answerable to those Principles; This is the very Drift and End of the bestowing of such principles upon us. Therefore, if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit, as the Apostle himself elsewhere infers from it in Gal. 5. 28. *If we live in the Spirit, that is, if we have a Principle of spiritual life infused into us.*

Thirdly, We are Debtors to the Spirit, from the Great Benefit, which does accrew and come to us herefrom, and which we have already had experience of. There's no man that has lived to the Spirit, but he has been the better for the spirit, and that even in other things also besides it self and of a different nature. *Spiritual Improvements*, they do many times carry along with them *Temporal Advancements*, both to whole Nations and States in general; and to private men and persons in particular. If they have had any Blessings at any time bestowed upon them, they may thank the Spirit of God himself for it, as dwelling amongst them.

Lastly, We are debtors to the Spirit, by virtue of our solemn engagement made unto him. Especially, which I mentioned before, in our Baptism when we were dedicated to God, and entered into Covenant with him, for the renouncing of every thing opposite and contrary hereto.

Therefore, let us make this Use of it, even to call our selves to an account in this particular, and to see how it is with us. Let us consider how far we have discharged this Debt which we are so much engaged in. Let us cast up our reckonings, and see what we have expended answerable to what we have received. Set Creditor on one hand, and set Debtor on the other; as we use to do in other matters. Good husbandry is no where more commendable, than it is in matters of Religion, and in things that concern our souls and Eternal welfare. If we do not reckon and keep count here, we are the greatest spendthrifts that are. And therefore let us seriously be moved and urged and perswaded hereunto. There are many Persons who think they have paid, who yet are very high in arrear, and are behind-hand very much in this respect. And the reason of it is this, Because they take that for

Payment,

Payment, which God Himself does not take so. Think that a few good words and pretences, and seeming resolutions, the outside and profession of Religion, the shew and *form* of Godliness, that these will serve the turn; whereas it is no such matter. Men may perhaps deceive themselves and other men, who are like themselves; but there's no deceiving of him; *God is not mocked*. He knows true Coyn from counterfeit, and weighty Gold from light. We are Debtors to the Spirit, and He will not be put off with such payments as belong rather to the *Flesh*. Were it not a strange thing for a Debtor to mistake his true Creditor? To run, and carry that to one man which belonged rather to another? Why, thus it is with many People in regard of their debts for their souls. They are Debtors to the Spirit, of their health, of their strength, of their time, of their parts, of their estates, and of all they have. And they offer the payment hereof, all to the *Flesh*. What an incongruous thing is this? and what little satisfaction has it in it? Therefore I say still, let us be careful to discharge our proper Duty in this particular.

And to set this so much the more upon us, let us consider these things with our selves. First, The Power of the Creditor, whom we are engaged unto. He is able to recover it of us whatsoever we owe him. And if we neglect or refuse to pay him, he knows how to help himself. Amongst men there is oftentimes a great deal of unworthiness and presumption in this particular. Those who are in such and such Circumstances, wherein they think their Creditors cannot reach them, they think they may be bold with them, and abuse them, and trespass upon them. But there's no such dealing with God. No securing, or saving themselves from him, who is able to meet with them.

Secondly, The strictness of the Creditor: That's another thing considerable likewise. He is one that is exact in his demands. And where he has not payment made unto him one way or other, will require the utmost farthing; as the Scripture informes us. As he is great in Power, so moreover he will not at all acquit the wicked, as we find it said of him, in *Nahum* 1. 3. Indeed, where we are careful to humble our selves before him, to acknowledge our manifold failings, and to make our terms with him in Christ, who is our surety and takes our debts upon him; there we may find mercy with him; and he is willing to take that which we are able to give him. Though he be strict in his propositions, yet he is very gracious in his Acceptations, and if there be a willing mind, it is taken according to what a man has, and not to what he has not, 2 Cor. 8. 12. But otherwise he is very strict and punctual, which should make us in our returns to be so likewise.

Thirdly, Let us further consider to this purpose the great Advantage of Paying, and the special Benefit which comes to us by it, whiles being Debtors to the Spirit, we are careful to be Payers too. We have a threefold Accommodation from it. First, A Further intrusting and committing of more unto us. Such Debtors as are not careful to pay, there's no body will trust them with any more. They have lost their Credit for time to come, from their miscarriage for time past. And so it is likewise here. When God gives men parts, and gifts, and opportunities and spiritual advantages; and they do not accordingly improve them, he does in such cases for time to come withdraw them, and withhold them from them. But where on the other side they use them, and so pay what they owe for them, he does now further continue them to them.

Secondly,

Secondly, *Further Inablement.* The more we are careful to pay, the more we shall be able to pay. Every new Performance is a *Preparation and Disposition* to another. To him that thus *hath*, shall be *given*. The more we do that which we *should* do, the more strength do we receive for the doing of it at *another time*. Whereas *forbearance*, as it makes us more *unwilling* every time than other; so it makes us also more *unable*.

Thirdly, *Peace of Conscience*, and Satisfaction and Tranquillity of mind. *Debts* they are commonly *troublesome*, and do much *disquiet* the minds of those who are intangled with them. But they are so no-where more than they are in *spiritual affairs* and *Engagements to God*; Especially there where any are truly *sensible* of them, and have their eyes open to discern them, and the consequences of them. But now again on the other side; some proportionable payment of these *Debts* thus to Gods gracious acceptance in Christ, it has much peace and quietness *with it*.

Now let all these things laid together serve to quicken us, and to work upon us. And let us upon all occasions *remember this present Truth*, which is now laid before us. Either in Temptation to the *commission of sin*, and the doing of that which is *Evil*, or in Temptation to the neglect of *Duty*, and the omitting of that which is *Good*. Consider to this purpose, what we are *Debtors*, or *not Debtors* to; And accordingly let us carry and behave our selves in this particular. We see how it is in the World; All men abominate such a Person as spends his money upon *toyes and trifles and baubles*, and in the mean time does *not pay his debts*. Why, even now such a kind of Person *is he*, that spends his time and strength and parts in the prosecuting and following of his *lusts*; whiles he neglects his *Duty to God* and the *providing for his own soul*.

Therefore let us learn thus to *reason* with our selves upon such occasions as these are; In Temptations to *luxury* and excess and Intemperance, and evil company and mispence of time. What? am I a *Debtor* to such things as these are? Do I owe any thing to the *Flesh*? that I should thus *give way* unto it? or do I not owe all rather to the *contrary* and in opposition unto it? And so in Temptations to *Idleness and unfruitfulness and neglect of Duty*, in such and such *places*, to such and such *relations*, upon such and such *Incouragements*. What? Is not this my *Duty*? Is not this that which I am *call'd and bound unto*? And which God does *require and expect* from me? And therefore *why* should I not do it?

Oh, beloved, we should by all means, and upon all occasions be still sowing to the *Spirit*, which we are so much *Debtors* to, and so laying up in store to our selves a good foundation against the time to come, laying *hold on eternal life*. And take heed of sowing to the *flesh*, which we are *no way debtors to*, And from whence in sowing to it we shall reap nothing else but *Corruption and Destruction, and Everlasting woe*.

To conclude, and to shut up all for this present; While it is said here, that we are *Debtors* to the Spirit, there are *two* things further, which we may gather from this Expression.

First, We see here, That *Religion* is not an *Arbitrary* Business. It is not a thing in our *own Power*; which we may either *do*, or *leave undone*, as we please; But such as we are *bound to conform to*. We are *Debtors to the spirit*. There are many that take up *Christianity* and the profession of
it

it upon very *indifferent* terms; and think *Religion* more beholding to *them*, than they are to *it*. No; but it is not so; we are *tyed and bound* to the Spirit, and there are solemn *Engagements* to Godliness which lye upon us.

Secondly, We see here also the Vanity of those Doctrines of *Merit* and works of *Supererogation* which our Adversaries the Papists have found out; as if we might be able not only to fulfil the Law, but to *exceed* it, and to *do more* than is *required* of us in it. These, they fall from this Point which we have now before us, wherein it is said, *we are Debtors to the Spirit*. Debtors not only in regard of what is required of us, but also of what is omitted by us. Now those that do not pay *their debts*, they cannot be said to *supererogate*. This is the case with us, we are *Banrupts and Beggars and Desperadoes*. And after our best and exactest performances, must say as our Saviour himself hath taught us to say, *we are unprofitable servants*, we have done but that which was *our duty* to do, nay indeed not half so much, in *Luke 17. 10*. So much for *that*; As also for this whole present *verse*, the 12 *verse* of this Chapter,

SER.

S E R M O N X V.

ROMANS 8. 13.

For if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die : but if ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the Body, ye shall live.

There is so near and close a conjunction betwixt the Heart of man and sin, as that there can never be said too much, nor enough to take him off from it : but there is need of continual remembrances, and Arguments to be used to him, to this purpose. And this is that which we may here observe in the course of this present Scripture, which we have still before us in the practice of the Apostle Paul, who after many Exhortations, which he had propounded to the Believing Romans, for the shunning of the waies of the Flesh, and for the walking in the waies of the Spirit, and besides the many Motives and Arguments which he had used to each purpose, does still proceed in the further pressing of this Doctrine upon them. As we may observe him to do in these words, which I have now read unto you, that is, Pœnâ & Præmio, from the Punishment which belongs to the one, and from the Reward which follows upon the other. If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die : but if ye by the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

IN the Text it self there are two General Parts considerable : *First*, a conditional *Threatening* or *Dreadful Commination* upon supposition of *miscarriage* : *If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die.* *Secondly*, a conditional *Promise*, or comfortable *Intimation* upon supposition of *well-doing* : *But if ye by the Spirit do mortifie, &c.*

We begin first of all with the former, viz. The Conditional *Threatening*, or *Commination*, *If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die.* What it is to *live after the Flesh*, we have in part heard before out of some former passages in this Chapter : And that is, namely, when in all our *thoughts, words, and actions*, we are ruled and guided by our *sinful and corrupt affections*, and do absolutely follow the *dictates and suggestions* of corrupt nature, and the *unregenerate part in us* : This is to *live after the Flesh* : And this is that which is here threatened with *Death*, as the punishment of it : Those that *live after the Flesh, shall die*, or, *the wages of sin is Death*, as it is express in another place, *Rom. 6. 23.* This is the Point which we have here now before us.

When

When it is said of such persons *that they shall die*, we must take it in the full latitude and extent of Death, that is, *Temporal, and Spiritual, and Eternal*: None excepted, but one with the other.

First, As to *Temporal Death*, or *Natural*, which consists in the meer separation of Soul and Body. This is *one* kind of Death which is called so in the first, and proper, and more ordinary signification of the word. And it is such as is first of all the *punishment of living after the flesh*. Those that *live after the flesh*, they *shall die in this* Acceptation, *a natural or temporal Death*. Why? but so (may some say) shall they also that *live after the Spirit*: Even they shall die also *thus*. Therefore what great matter is there in that? Nay, but there is somewhat more in it than *so*. It is true, that even *Spiritual* persons shall die also, as well as *Carnal*: And that also in reference to the *flesh*, and corruption, as the *first occasion* of it. *The Body is dead because of sin*, as we have heard heretofore out of that place, in *Rom. 8. 10*. But here when it is said of *carnal* persons that *they shall die*, there is somewhat *more* intended in it, and by it: And that is to signify, that they do hereby oftentimes procure their own *destruction*, and *hasten* their end. The *Courses* which such persons take, they are such as do *tend* to such an evil as *this* is: *To be carnally minded is Death*, as we have it in the Verse before: the sixth Verse of this Chapter.

This it holds good, according to a twofold account: *First*, from the Course and Order of Gods unchangeable Justice, who hath so appointed it. *Secondly*, from the immediate connexion of the Cause with its effect.

First, In the Course of Gods Justice, who hath so ordained it, and appointed it, *Rom. 1. 32*. *who knowing the Judgement of God, that they which do such things are worthy of Death*. Though it is true, that God has reserved his chiefest Judgements for another world, yet he counts it a part of his Justice to punish them *here* also, such as walk in the *waies of sin*, and to exercise them with *temporal Death*: Especially according to the nature of those sins which they are guilty of. *Presumptuous* miscarriages call for *present* revenges, and will not suffer God any longer to delay his punishment of them. *Be not overmuch wicked: why shouldst thou die before thy time?* And *Psal. 55. 23*. *Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their daies*. Thus we see how Death follows upon such courses, in order to Gods own Justice.

Secondly, From a Connexion of the cause with the effect. Sin, and especially a living and conversing in the waies of it, brings Death likewise *so*. As Drunkards, and Gluttons, and Wantons, and Intemperate persons, the very *courses* which they take are destructive in a natural way, and although there were no punishment hereafter, yet would have their Bane and mischief *here*, as we may conceive to be threatened to them here in the Text, *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die*: By taking it for Death in its Temporal or Natural Acceptation.

Secondly, *Spiritual Death*: which consists in deprivation of Grace, and Holiness, and Peace, and Spiritual comfort, *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die*. In this sense also, there is no man that lives in any carnal way whatsoever: but so long as he lives in that way, he is in a degree of *Spiritual Death*, and tendency to the defacing of the Image of God in him, whiles it is so with him.

The ground hereof is taken from the opposition, and contrariety which is

betwixt the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*. These two are so directly opposite, as that the *flourishing* of the one, must needs diminish the *vigor* of the other, and take from it. Look as it is in the *Body*: The *Life* of the *disease* is so far forth the *death* of the *man*: and as that gathers strength to it self, so does his weakness. Even so it is likewise in the *Soul*, when *sin* revives, that *dies*, as the *Apostle Paul* speaks of himself, *Rom. 7. 9.* *Grace and Corruption* cannot be *intensively* in the same *subject*.

Thirdly, There is another *Death*: And that is, *Death Eternal*. The *separation* of *Soul* and *Body* from *God*, for ever in *Hell*. And this is also consequent upon *living after the flesh*: *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die*, in this sense also. *Die*, that is, *die Eternally*. This is that which the *Scripture* does abundantly declare unto us, *1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.* *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God?* And he instances there in particulars, *Fornicators, Idolaters, Adulterers, Covetous, Extortioners, Drunkards*, and the like; so *Gal. 5. 21.* speaking of the works of the *flesh*, of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in times past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. And *Gal. 6. 8.* *He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption*: *Corruption*, that is, *Destruction*, and *Eternal Damnation*, as appears by the following antithesis, or opposition, where 'tis said, *That he that soweth to the Spirit, shall reap Life Everlasting.* And *Rev. 21. 8.* speaking of such like persons it is said, that they have their part in the *Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone*, which is the *second Death*.

This is requisite so to be from a *Consideration of the Majesty of God*, against whom such sins are committed. When we look upon things simply in themselves, we may not perhaps so easily discern or apprehend it: we may wonder that such punishment should follow, or belong hereunto: But when we consider the greatness of that Person that is offended, and dishonoured by them, then we shall see the *Equity* of it, and that there is very great reason for it.

The *Consideration* of this Point is matter of very great astonishment to all carnal persons whatsoever: and serves to strike a special awe and terror into them. *Death* it is an affrighting word, and carries a very sad resemblance and presentation of it self to the *Soul*. Now in all the kinds, and extent of it, we see how it is the punishment of such persons, as live after the flesh.

First, For *Temporal Death*. That *Death* which men are most sensible and apprehensive of, of all other. They may take notice here of that, as belonging unto them. Though all men die at last, both good and bad, one as well as another. Yet men commonly come sooner to their Ends, by such waies as these are; and this, if nothing else, might deter them from them.

And besides, there is this in it, that this *Death*, though in regard of the state of it, it be common to all, both *spiritual*, and *carnal*; yet in regard of the circumstances, it is differently qualified to them: For to those who are good, and that live after the *Spirit*, the sting of it is taken out of it by *Christ*. Whereas, those who are naught, and that live after the *flesh*, the sting of it remains in it, and lies upon them as a fruit and effect of Gods curse inflicted upon their persons.

But then *secondly*, *Spiritual Death*. To consider of that likewise, the *Death*

Death of the *Souls*. Consider what a misery it is for any person to be under *that*. Alas! what is it for any one to have a lively and *vigorous Body*, and to have a dead and withered soul? To be in good liking and plight, in his *Flesh* and outward man, and to have his *Heart* and *Spirit* out of frame? What is such an one as this, but a loathsome, and noysome Carcass, in the apprehension both of God himself, and all others that are good besides?

And then *thirdly*, For *Eternal Death*, the very height and top of all misery, which consists in a perpetual Exclusion from the presence of God, and the enduring of everlasting torment, both in *Body* and *Soul*. Who that had their wits about them, that did thoroughly believe these things, and did consider them, and think upon them, would for a little poor momentary pleasure here, and the spending of a few daies in sin, and the following, and satisfying of the *Flesh*, run the venture and hazard of such things as these are? *Yet this is that*, which Truth it self doth here declare, and assure unto us, *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die*.

Where, for the further Amplification of this present passage unto us, take notice of one thing more: That *Doctrines of Threatening*, do well agree with the *Preaching of the Gospel*: and the mentioning of *Damnation* is not impertinent even to Believers themselves. This is that which we may here observe and take notice of, from this practice of the *Apostle Paul* in this present Scripture, who though an *Evangelical Preacher*, and though writing to the Believing *Romans*, does yet deliver himself in such a way as this is. This is that which we shall find to be practised in other places. Thus Christ himself to his Disciples, *Luk. 12. 4, 5*. *I say unto you my friends, Fear not them that kill the Body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him, who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into Hell, Yea, I say unto you, Fear him:* Where it seems, that even Christs Friends themselves have cause to be afraid of Hell: *Destruction from the Almighty made me afraid*, saies even holy *Job* of himself, *Job 31. 23*. For why, even the *best that are*, they have the seeds and principles of *sin and corruption* in them, which do expose them to *Damnation Demeritoriously*: though they are *actually* prevented from it. And upon this account there is ground for the propounding of such *Doctrines* to them as these are, especially, as whereby to keep them from *presumption and carnal security*, which would otherwise be too apt to *creep and increase* upon them, and at last to *overwhelme* and destroy them. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we perswade men*, &c. saies the *Apostle*, in *2 Cor. 5. 11*.

Therefore this may serve to justify the practice of Ministers, in this particular against all exceptions to the contrary. And may likewise perswade people to a meek entertainment of it; as being such as is very requisite and convenient for them. There is nothing more necessary for them than that they should sometimes hear of *Hell*; that so by this means they may the better *escape* it, and be kept from coming into that *dreadful place* at last, which otherwise may chance to betide them. It is better a great deal to *hear of Hell*, than to *feel* it; and they that cannot endure the *one*, they must be content to fall into the *other*, which cannot be *endured*. And so now I have done with the *first General Part* of the Text: which is, the *Conditional Threatening*, or *Dreadful intimation*, upon supposition of miscarriage, in these words, *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die*.

The *Second* is the *Conditional Promise*, or *Comfortable Intimation* upon supposition of *Repentance* and new obedience, in these, *But if ye through the Spirit, do mortifie the deeds of the flesh*, &c. Wherein, again we have *four Particulars* more. *First*, the *Duty* mentioned: and that is, *Mortification*. *Secondly*, the proper *Object*, which this *Duty* is conversant about: and that is, *the deeds of the Body*. *Thirdly*, the *Principal Original*, whence this *Duty* proceeds, or the *means*, or *manner* of *Performance*: *By the Spirit*. *Fourthly*, the *Reward* or *Benefit* which does follow and ensue upon it: *Ye shall live*.

First, To speak of the *former*: Namely, the *Duty* it self, which is *Mortification*, *ni baw'ni*, *If ye*, &c. This is a *Duty* which lies upon every *Christian*, to exercise and inure himself to *Mortification*, that is, to the *killing and crucifying* of *sin* in him. This is the *Point* which is here offered unto us. And it is that which is piest upon us in divers other places besides: thus *Col. 3. 5. Mortifie therefore your members, which are upon the Earth*, &c. *Eph. 4. 22. That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the Old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts*. *Gal. 5. 24. They that are Christs, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*. *Rom. 6. 6. Knowing this, that our Old man is Crucified with him, that the Body of sin might be destroyed*, &c.

For the better opening of this present *Point* unto us, there are *two* things especially, which are here to be declared by us: *First*, *what it is*, and wherein this does principally consist. *Secondly*, upon what account, and for what reason it is to be exercised and practised by us; each of these are here very considerable.

First, Wherein this *mortifying of sin*, whereof we now speak, does mainly and principally consist. And this we may take according to these following *Explications*: *First*, it does imply an *Active*, and *spontaneous opposition* of *sin* of our *own accord*. A man does not then mortifie *sin* in himself, when he is only *violently* restrained, and kept from the *acting and committing* of it, but when himself does *voluntarily*, and *freely* set himself against it, and makes it his *business* to get the *mastery* and *victory* of it.

Secondly, It does imply *difficulty* and *trouble* in the *Performance* of it. *Dying*, it is usually with some *pain*: as being that which *Nature* does struggle with, and strive against; especially *violent Death*, and that which follows upon *killing*: *This*, it is *painful*, especially. Now such is this condition of ones *killing and Crucifying of lust, and corrupt affections*. It is a very hard and difficult matter, and such as is not done without much *reluctancy*, and contrary opposition from *flesh and Blood*. *Created Nature* does not more abhor *Natural Death*, the *Death of the Body*; than *corrupted Nature* does abhor this *mystical Death*. *The killing of sin*, Oh! it is that which a carnal person cannot endure to hear or think of; ye cut him to the very *Soul*, and pierce him to the very *Heart* when ye require *this* of him, and call him to the *mortifying of his Lusts*. Therefore we may not think that any *slightness*, or *perfunctory carriage* will here serve our turns. No, but there is a great deal of *labour*, and *endeavour*, and *self-denial*, which does concur, and go hereto. And hence it is that the *Spirit of God* in *Scripture* does set it forth to us by expressions of *Difficulty*; as *Circumcision*, *Crucifixion*, *Dismembering*, and such as these. All to signify thus much unto

us: that there is Pain, and Difficulty in it, as indeed there *is* in a very great measure.

This arises from *that strength* and settlement which sin hath *in the heart*. The difficulty, and painfulness of the *one*, is proportioned to the radication of the *other*. As we see it is again in *Nature*: That those who have the *strongest Constitutions*, they have commonly the *painfullest Deaths*. Even so is it likewise in *Grace*: Those who have the *strongest corruption*, they have the *hardest mortification*. Sin, and a carnal heart, especially which is further hardened by *custom*, and prosperity, and success in sin, they are not so easily parted, and severed, as men are ready to imagine. No, there is more belongs to it than *so*. It is not a little *speaking against* it which is enough, but there must be a slaying of it, which implies a great deal of pain, and difficulty in it.

Thirdly, This mortification, it does imply a weakening of the *Power and Vigour* of sin in us. That look as a Body which *is dead*, it is thereby made unerviceable and unfit for the actions of *Life*: so a man also, that is spiritually mortified, sin is *in him* made *unactive* and unfit for the former services and performances which proceeded from it. This is not so to be taken, as if sin were *absolutely destroyed* in him here in this *Life*, for so it is *not*. There are the *stirrings* and motions of it in the *best that are*. But it is meant in regard of such a *measure*, and degree of activity, as *had been before*. Sin in those in whom it is mortified, it hath received its *death wound*; and so is hastening, and tending to *Death* every day more than other. It is mortified in regard of the *beginnings* and inchoations of it. And so also in regard of the *endeavours* of him, who is said to mortifie it. It is that which every good heart does *labour and strive* after, as much as in him lies, to *extirpate*, and *annihilate*, and quite destroy sin in himself, that so it may not be able, as near as can, to put forth any action of *Life* in him at all.

Fourthly, It implies *Universality*, that is, a resisting of *all* kind of sin, without *exception*. Killing, it is a destroying of *Life in every part*. As man is said, sometimes, in a sense, to be *dead only one part*: but he is not *kill'd*, except he be dead in *all*; and the Soul totally separated from the Body in every member: Even so is it here in this particular: There must not be only a restraining of *some* sins, but a fighting against *all*. Where any one reigns, there is no true Mortification.

Fifthly, and lastly, It implies *continuance*, and the *often renewing* of *this Act* time after time. It is put here in the *present tense*, *because*, If ye do mortifie: And it is spoken to the *believing* Romans, who had mortified their *sins already*; and yet even *they* were here called, to a further Mortification of them: And so are all *others* to do in the *same condition* with them: and that for this reason especially, Because there is still work afforded us in this particular, by the daily and continual rising up of new *Corruptions* in us, and *Temptations* upon us. And so much may suffice of the *first Particular*, which I propounded to be considered here in this Point: And that is, the *Nature* of this Mortification of sin, *what it is*, and *wherein it consists*.

The *Second*, Is the *Grounds, or Reasons* which do make for the *Performance* of it, which may be reduced to these Heads: *First*, The *Nature* of *sin*, and the thing it self, which is to be mortified: and that is, our mortal and deadly Enemy. *If a man find his Enemy, (saies Saul) will he let him*

go well away? Enmity, it invites Destruction as well as threatens it. *Quem metuant oderunt quem oderunt perisse cupiunt.* Those whom men fear they hate, and those whom men hate they kill, or at least they are ready to do it if they had opportunity for it. Now thus it is with us to sin, or should be so, if we rightly consider it. It is such an one as hates us, and endeavours our utter destruction; therefore we have cause to hate it and to desire the destruction of that. We must in this case, either kill or be kill'd; which we please. If we do not mortify sin, sin will be sure to mortify us; we may be confident of that, *If ye live after the flesh ye shall dye*; as we had it before in the text; and that Eternally. Now it is better to go into the Kingdom of Heaven halt, than to be cast whole into Hell-fire.

Secondly, There is reason for it also from that Power which is wrought in a Christian by *Christs spirit* tending thereto, and the special vertue which is contained in the Death and Sufferings of Christ to this purpose. Therefore it is said here in the very text, *If ye by the spirit mortify the deeds of the body*: as who should say, You which have the spirit, ye have it for this very end, and intent, that ye might put forth such an action as this is, as suitable hereto. Thus we find the Apostle also to argue and reason in some other places; as *Rom. 6. 6.* &c. our old man being Crucified with Christ, that therefore we should not serve sin; and that therefore we should not suffer sin to reign or rule in us; but be dead as it were unto it. And so to the *Coloss. 3. 5.* Because ye are dead and risen with Christ, therefore mortify your earthly members, &c.

Thirdly, It is requisite also from that obedience which we owe to God in the whole course of our lives. Where there is not a mortification of sin, there will be certainly a decaying of Grace, and so consequently an Interruption of obedience and of that Duty which we should perform to God. Where sin is alive, Grace cannot be alive too, in one and the same subject, and at the same time: Therefore we shall find the Apostle opposing them still one to the other, as in the Chapter before mentioned, *Rom. 6. 11.* Likewise reckon ye also your selves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God; see here, *Dead unto sin, and alive unto God*: these two they must go together, and cannot be separated. No man can be alive to God, that is, perform lively service to him, but he that is first dead to sin; that is, that hath sin and corruption first Crucified and Mortified in him.

Fourthly, As an Evidence of our Justification, and the forgiveness of our sins unto us. No man can be so comfortably assured that his sin is pardoned, that does not find his sin mortified. Where ever sin remains in the Power of it, it remains also in the guilt of it; and where it conquers, it also condemns and clamors in the heart of the sinner: But now where it is in some degree killed and quelled and subdued in us, there the guilt of it is taken away from us. Christ comes to us not only by blood, but also by water: not only by blood in the pardoning of sin, but also by water in the cleansing of it: and renews us and takes it away. Thus we see what use there is for the practice of this Duty.

The Consideration of this Point (for the use of it to our selves) serves therefore to put us upon the Practice and Performance of it, as that which is mainly and principally required of us. It is the chief work of a Christian, and that which in the right performance of it, and due reflexion upon it, does most discover him to be a Christian indeed of any thing else besides. It is
not

not the *meer Discourse* about Religion; and the having of the Doctrines of it only floating and swimming in our brains, which does approve us, and *commend us to God*, but the sinking of these things into our *hearts*, and the *working* of them out into our *lives and Conversations*. When we are made more *inclinable to Goodness*, and more *averse*, and *estranged from sin*, than formerly we were, when we find the *Power and strength* of Corruption more abating and decaying in us, this is true Religion indeed, and such as will be able to afford us *the greatest comfort*.

On the other side where this is *not*: let men have never so much speculative knowledge, and parts, and discourse and the like, they are notwithstanding but in a *dead condition*. Those in whom sin is not dead, they are no better than *dead themselves*. As it is said of persons living in *pleasure*, *Dead whiles they live*, 1 Tim. 5. 6. that is, in reference either to *Spiritual or Eternal Life*. Therefore it concerns us especially to look after this and such Doctrines as tend hereunto.

To quicken and provoke us so much the more hereunto: let us take in these Considerations with us. First, The *Command* of God, who has laid this Duty upon us; If there were nothing else but this in it, it were enough to prevail upon us, if we were that which we should be; for what should be more effectual with Christians, who have given themselves up to God, than to do that which he requires of them? *Then are ye my friends* (sayes Christ) *when ye do whatsoever I command you*: now this is that which God has *commanded* us to do, to mortifie sin in our selves, not only here, but in *other places*.

Secondly, *Our own Interest*, and the *great Good* which we *reap from it*, both in point of Grace and Comfort, and at *last of Salvation it self*, as it follows afterwards in the text; where 'tis said, *ye shall live*. The killing and deadening of the sin, is the *life* of the sinner himself that does so kill it.

Thirdly, The *Evil of the contrary*: and the *great Disparagement* which lies upon sin unmortified. Sin it is an *odious business* in many respects, and hath sundry inconveniences with it.

First, There is no *true pleasure* or contentment in it. That pleasure which carnal persons seem to take in it, it is *but false, and counterfeit*: It is the pleasure of a *Disease*; not of a good or sound constitution; as excessive drinking is pleasing to a man in a Dropfie, which arises from his distemper.

Secondly, Sin is also *insatiable*: and the more that men *give way unto it*, the more it prevails still upon them. That which makes many people to *yield* to their lusts, should be the greatest motive to them to *restrain them*, and to mortifie them, and to keep from them. What's that which makes men sometimes to yield and to give way to them? It is as they think, that thereby they may be freed from the troubles and solicitations of them: nay but this *yielding* does so much the more *involve you*, and *intangle you*, and inthrall you to them. He that goes about to satisfy his lusts, he shall never have done when once he begins. It is an infinite and endless business, whereas *denial* of them is the way to *escape them*: as when ye take away the fuel, the fire goes out; when ye *add* to it, ye so much the more *increase it*.

Thirdly, Sin is Deceitful and Dangerous: It makes us *slaves to Satan*: It makes us *Enemies to God*: It *Crucifies Christ*: It *fightes against the soul*: It *takes*

takes away the heart, and weakens the power of grace in us. These and the like are such Considerations as may move us, and persuade us to the killing and mortifying of it.

Now for the right Performance of this Duty, and that we may do it so as we should do, it is requisite for us to take notice of these three following Rules, or Directions, which conduce hereto.

First, There must be a *stedfast purpose* of opposing and *resisting* of sin, with might and main. He shall never *mortifie* his sin, that makes account to give way unto it, in the *offers and proposals* of it, or that is upon *indifferent* terms with it : no, but he must be *willing* to leave it, and to part with it ; yea not only be *willing* but *desirous* and *resolved*. That come, what *ever* will come, whether good or evil, whether prosperity or adversity, yet he will by no means *close* with it.

Secondly, There must be a *Diligent heed* for the avoiding of *all occasions of sin*, and all *Inducements* which lead thereunto. Where sin is thoroughly mortified in *it self*, it is mortified also in its *preparations* and tendencies to it ; *Evil company*, *Evil Communication*, a looseness and *carelessness of carriage*. He that has a *mortified heart*, he will have a mortified *eye*, and a mortified *ear*, and the like : he will *shun and avoid such ways* as may draw out that *habitual* Corruption and Defilement which is in his heart. The *Nazarite* must cast away the *husk* of the Grape, *Numb. 6. 4.* and the *Israelites* must have *no leaven in their houses*, *Exod. 12. 15.*

Thirdly, There must be a *Conscionable use* of all such means as serve to the subduing of sin in us. What are *they* ? I will name some of the *chief and principal* of them.

First, A *sober and moderate use* of the Creatures in those things, which in their *own nature* are *lawful and warrantable*. He that will do all he *may* do, he will sometimes do more than he *should*. Therefore some things which may be *allowable* considered in *themselves*, yet in *such circumstances*, and in order to *such Duties* which are to be performed by such and such persons, may be *forbidden* and prohibited to them, and accordingly to be avoided by them.

Secondly, Prayer and Fasting, that's another help likewise. And there is very great use of it, though not as the *Papists* make it, which place an *holiness* in the bare abstinence from such and such meats which they determine to *such particular times*, and expect a *reward* from it, as *meriting* somewhat by it ; which is a meer cheat, and piece of *Pageantry* ; but as a *curbing*, and subduing of the *Flesh*, that thereby it may be more obedient to the *spirit*, and so not hindered in those *spiritual actions* which are to be performed by it. Thus the Apostle *Paul* himself, tells us, that he did keep under his body, and bring it into subjection, *ἐνταῦθα ἡ δουλοῦσις*, 1 Cor. 9. 27. thereby to prevent the *rankness and luxuriancy* of it. And the same is likewise commendable and practicable by any other besides, for the same purpose. *Fasting* it must not be used as the *End*, in which we rest, but as the *means*, which carries us to *some what else beyond it self*, which such fasting is *conducible* to : and so in order to Mortification.

Thirdly, and principally, An *act of faith*, in the *Death and sufferings of Christ*. This is a special means for the *mortifying of sin in us*. When as that power, which sustained Christ in the suffering of Death for us, is accordingly

cordingly improved by us for the killing of sin in our selves; *This is that whereby we are planted into the likeness and similitude of his Death*, Rom. 6. 5. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the first Particular in this second General, which is the Duty it self here mentioned, and so required of us, to wit, *Mortification, If ye Mortifie, &c.*

The Second is the Object of this Duty, or the matter, which it is conversant about. And that is here exprest to be the deeds of the Body, *Τὰ ἔργα τοῦ σώματος*. What's the meaning of this? that is indeed the sins, and miscarriages of the whole man. We are not here to take it in the limited sense only, but in the extended. Not in the limited only, as confining it to the outward man; but in the extended, as taking in inward together with it. This work of Mortification, it begins first of all in the Inward man, and so ends in the outward; only the outward is here mentioned, and named: And it is said, The Deeds of the Body expressly; because the Body, it is that which is *manifestatum peccati*; It is that wherein sin does especially shew and discover it self; whereas the mind is not so easily discerned in the corruptions and miscarriages of it. So 2 Cor. 5. 10. *τὰ δὲ ἑα σώματος*, The things which are done in the Body, though comprehending the soul likewise; the Actions of the whole Person: and Col. 3. 9. *The old man with his Deeds*. And thus much for the second particular.

The third Particular is the principle whence this Duty doth proceed in us, or the means whereby we perform it. And that is here exprest to be the Spirit. *Πνεῦμα*. If ye by the Spirit, &c. By the spirit we are here to understand the Spirit of God; the Holy Spirit which is called so *Emphatically*. Mortification of sin, it is the proper and peculiar work of this Spirit in us, and is effected in no other way. The same spirit that is active in quickening of us and in infusing of Grace into us; the same spirit is also active in mortifying of us and in killing of sin in us: *Even the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus Christ from the Dead*, as it is call'd in a verse or two before. Deut. 30. 6. *The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seed*, &c. Rom. 6. 14. *Sin shall not have Dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law but under Grace*. Phil. 1. 19. *This shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ*. Rom. 8. 20. *The Law of the spirit of life*, &c.

This must needs be so upon these following considerations. First, From the strength and power of sin, and that rooting which it hath in the soul: none can overcome the strong man, but some one that is stronger than he indeed is. And so it is here: strong Corruptions they cannot be mastered and conquered and subdued, but by the power of an Almighty God and his Spirit prevailing over them.

Secondly, From the proper means of the killing of sin in us: which as we shewed before is the application of Christs death unto us. Now this is done only by the Spirit which is active in us, to this purpose; and more especially, as working and stirring up of the Grace of Faith in us, whereby we do actually make this Application.

Thirdly, From the Covenant of Grace, which God hath made with all Believers, which is to bestow his Spirit upon them to this purpose, as Ezek. 36. 27. *I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgements, and do them*. All Duties in the Covenant of Grace,

E c

they

they are now performed through the Mediation of the Spirit which is helpful and assistant to us in the acting and performing of them : And so now is this, in particular, of the *mortification of sin*, amongst the rest.

The use of this point to our selves comes to this. *First*, As it teaches us not to ascribe the performance of this Duty to our selves or any ability of *our own*. It is *not we* but the *Spirit of God* in us, and *we by the Spirit*. It is we who are the *Subjects* of this Duty; but it is the *Spirit of God*, who is the *Efficient*, and *He alone*. The Spirit by the first infusion of Grace into us; and we in the improvement of that Grace, which the Spirit hath wrought in us. Therefore let us from hence learn to give the glory and praise of all to *the Spirit*, to whom it *belongs*. It is *not we* by the Power of *Nature*, but it is *He* by his gracious assistance and concurrence with us herein.

There are some kind of Persons in the world, who when we speak of mortifying of sin, think to do it by a power of *their own* : And when they speak of mortifying it by the *Spirit*, understand thereby their *own Spirit*, that is, by the strength of *natural reason*, which they do very much cry up to this purpose : but this will prove to be very defective to such a purpose as this is, and does prove so in the event in such persons as do so cry it up, and plead for it. As we may observe in the Heathen Philosophers and such persons as those were, who under the greatest pretences to *Reason*, were the greatest slaves to *Lust*, to pride, and ambition, and covetousness, and such things as these. Therefore it is not *Reason*, but *Grace* which has the predominancy in this particular. Mortification, it is a work of the Spirit, and that in sanctifying and *renewing* of us.

Again *Secondly*, We may from hence take an account of *true* Mortification from *false*. There are many, who seem to *mortify* sin, who indeed do no such matter. And there are great mistakes in this particular; as first, when men have not that *occasion*, and *opportunity* of sinning as formerly; this seems to be a deadening of sin in them, but it is no such matter. For when occasions are again afforded and temptations are renewed upon them, they are as bad as ever they *were before*.

Secondly, as in the want of opportunity, so also of *ability*. As in age, and sickness and the like. There are many persons, that their sins do rather leave *them*, than *they* do leave their *sins*. Their mind is still good enough to them; but they have not *ability* for them: this is no Mortification at all. *Impotency* is not *Innocency*; nor want of *ability*, *Grace*.

Thirdly, There are some persons who are sometimes restrained from some actions and commissions of sin from the present terrors of God upon them; from some sickness or other affliction, which is upon them and keeps them in awe for the present, though their heart and affection to their lusts be the same that ever it was.

Fourthly, In some their Corruption, it is not mortified, but only changed in them, and removed from one sin to another; as from prodigality to covetousness, from uncleanness to ambition, and the like: this is no mortifying neither.

Lastly, There is in many persons no more but the Power of Education and restraining grace, which are things that do very much fall short of this mortifying of the Spirit.

The third Use of this Point may be this, To shew the Vanity and fond conceit of such persons as think to mortifie sin in themselves, only by outward restraints, as by Vows, and by Wagers and the like. Alas ! all this will not do, *Oportet esse aliquid intus*, Ye must mortifie these sinful deeds by the Spirit. And that's also the Third Particular ; viz. The Original, or Means of this Performance.

The Fourth and last is the Benefit, or Reward consequent upon it. That's in these words, *Ye shall live*. This is a point which I shall not now insist upon, because we have had it before out of the sixth verse of this Chapter, where we have shewn you ; and that at large, *That to be spiritually minded is Life, and Peace*. It holds good in all the notions and specifications of life whatsoever.

First, Of natural life, *Length of Days is in her right hand*, Prov. 3. 16.

Secondly, Of spiritual life, *I am Crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live ; Yet not I but Christ liveth in me ; And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith, &c.*

Thirdly, Of Eternal life, Rom. 6. 22. *Ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life*. And Gal. 6. 8. *He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption*.

All this laid together should make us the more careful to practise it. And so I have done with the Text in both the parts of it.

S E R M O N X V I.

ROMANS 8. 14.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.

There is no more Effectual Argument to perswade men to be that which they should be, than by considering what they are. Dignity in the right apprehension and improvement, has an Influence upon Duty ; for the better urging and inforcing of it, and provoking unto it. And thus it appears to have in this Scripture which we have now before us. where St. Paul, among other Arguments which he uses to perswade the Romans, and in them, all of us to holiness and mortification, fetches one from our state of Adoption and spiritual Sonship, in as much as we are the Children of God, and in that regard to imitate and resemble our heavenly Father, who is purity and holiness it self. And we are likeliest to do so by taking such a Course and way as this is with our selves. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.

IN the Text it self there are two General Parts considerable : First, the Persons mentioned. Secondly, the Priviledge or happy estate and Condition which is fastened upon them. The Persons mentioned, in these words, *As many as are led by the Spirit of God* ; The Priviledge fastened upon those Persons, in these, *They are the Sons of God.*

We begin with the first of these parts, viz. the Persons mentioned ; which is the subject, or Antecedent of the Proposition : *As many as are led by the Spirit of God.* Wherein again we have three Particulars more. First, the Property it self, and that is, to be led by the Spirit of God. Secondly, the Communication of this property, to a Diversity and Plurality of persons : *As many as are led.* Thirdly, the Consent, or Confederacy of this conduct in this Variety. *Many and different persons led by one and the self same Spirit.*

First, To take notice of the Property it self here mentioned, which is to be led by the Spirit of God ; where we may observe, That there is such a thing indeed in the world as this is, which some persons are partakers of. There is a twofold leading by the Spirit : The one is common and ordinary ; The other is special and peculiar. The Common and Ordinary, is that which is agreeable to all Creatures ; who in him do live, move, and have their being. Thus even the Beasts were brought to Adam in Paradise ; and to Noah into the Ark, by a common instinct from the Spirit of God. And

so for *Men*, they are sometime led by the Spirit of God in a common way, as to the common gifts of it. The Spirit of fortitude, and the Spirit of government, and the Spirit of Prophecy, and the like. As *Saul*, and *Balaam*, and *Caiaphas*, and such as these: they had the Spirit of God in a common Dispensation upon them. Yea, even Godly men themselves are considerable sometimes, as led only by this Spirit in such and such particular actions: though for the general led also by another, as 2 Pet. 1. 21. It is said that the Prophets, and holy men of God, in former times they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, *ὡς ἀντιλαβόμενοι τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος*, Moved by the Holy Ghost, that is, the Holy Ghost did suggest and dictate unto them such things as were either spoken or written by them. And they were led by the Spirit of God in those Prophecies that came from them. Which though in those particular persons, was accompanied with another work of the Holy Ghost upon them; they being said, to be holy men of God: yet in it self considered, it was no more than a common work of the Spirit; which did not at all change the subject in which it was, but only qualifie it for that particular Emp'oyment. And this is that leading of the Spirit, which is common and ordinary.

But Secondly, There is another leading of the Spirit, which is special and peculiar, and proper only to the Children of God, considered as such under that Notion, and reduplication of them, whereby the heart of man is changed and altered from what it's carried to by corrupt Nature: and hath another bias and principle put into it: And this is that leading of the Spirit of God, which is here intended.

Now this (for the better opening of it to us) is considerable with a double reference: Either first of all to our first Conversion, when we are first of all brought home to God, and recovered from the state of Nature. Or, Secondly, to our following Conversation, being already actually reduced, and in the state of Grace. There is the leading and guiding of the Spirit, which is requisite and necessary for Christians in each of these Conditions.

First, To look upon it in order to our first, and Primitive Conversion. The Children of God, they are led on by his Spirit in this. And there are three things, which do make up this unto us: First, Information, or discovery of such and such Truths in the Proposition. Secondly, Illumination, or enabling of the mind, to conceive and apprehend those Truths, which are thus discovered. Thirdly, Inclination, or bowing of the Will, and Affections to close and comply with such Truths and motions, which are apprehended: The Spirit of God does all these three in the work of Conversion.

First, It does propound, and discover, and declare such and such Truths, in a way of simple Information. This the Spirit does outwardly and externally in the Ministry of the Word. Those that live under the means of Grace and Ordinances, they have those things made known unto them, which others are to seek in, concerning the nature of sin; concerning the Grace of Christ, concerning Heaven and Glory to come: This is a leading (as I may say) objectively, and by way of Proposition.

Secondly, The Spirit does also open the understanding to discern those things which are thus propounded, and to conceive aright of them. For when the things are discovered as to themselves, yet there is a blindness, which still remains upon our minds, till the Holy Ghost takes it away from us: And this is that which in Conversion he does for us: He gives us the Spirit of

of wisdom and Revelation, in the knowledge of him: The eyes of our understanding being enlightened, Eph. 1. 17.

Thirdly, There is another thing also, wherein this Leading does consist, and which makes it compleat: And that is, a bowing and inclining of the will and affections to close with these truths thus discovered, and to yield obedience unto them. The Spirit of God does not only irradiate, and enlighten the understanding to know, but also draw the Heart and Spirit to receive and embrace those things that concern its salvation.

And this again (that we may conceive rightly of it) with a double qualification: First, *strongly and powerfully*; and Secondly, *mildly and sweetly*, we are led by the Spirit of God in Conversion, both of these waies.

First, *Strongly and Powerfully*. Whomsoever God has a mind to convert, and to bring home to himself, he will so hold them, and lead them by his hand; as that he will infallibly bring them to that End which he has ordained them unto. This Leading, it hath a prevailing power and efficacy with it; which though Corruption may struggle against, yet it cannot overcome. Draw me, and we will run after thee, saies the Spouse, Cant. 1. 4. Converting Grace, it is irresistible; so that as none can come to Christ, except his Spirit incline him: so none can stand out against Christ, where his Spirit is pleased to bring home: He leads us *strongly and powerfully*; and that is one qualification of this Leading.

Secondly, He leads us *mildly and sweetly*: that's another. He so leads us, as he does also make us to go of our selves. He does not deal with us as with Stocks and Stones, or as brut Beasts, which have no understanding: but so as preserving the Soul in the natural freedom and liberty of it, as it is in Hos. 11. 3, 4. I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their Arms; And I drew them with the cords of a man, with bands of Love. God does so far prevail upon us, as that he prevails with us. This leading, it is not as the leading of a Cart, or of a Stone, which hath no motion of it self, any further than is put into it extrinsically and occasionally from the drawing of it: but it is a leading, which supposes reason and counsel in those which are led, *Acti agimus*, we act, being acted first. Grace, it works upon reason, and improves it to its own purpose. We are not willing till we are led: but in leading, we are made to be willing to that which we are led unto. Not Antecedently, but Consequently, or Concomitantly to the Grace of God. Thy People shall be willing in the day of thy Power, Psal. 110. 3. That's the first Leading of the Spirit of God, which is considerable in Believers: Namely, in order to their Primitive Conversion, and the work of Grace wrought in their hearts.

The second, Is in order to their following and continued Conversation. As the Spirit of God leads us to Grace, so it leads us in it; and as it brings us to Christ at first, so it keeps us and preserves us in such waies as are suitable to him, and never leaves us till it has brought us to Heaven, which is our Journeys-End; and we do likewise close and comply with this his leading of us: which is indeed, properly, to be led by him. This is that which is very necessary for us, as well as the former. We have not only need to be put into a state of Grace and Holiness at first; but to be led and conducted in all the waies of holiness for time to come; and to be sustained and upheld in them: And therefore it is that the Scripture still makes mention of this unto us in sundry places of it, as Psal. 73. 24. Thou shalt guide me by thy Counsel,

and

and afterwards receive me unto glory. And Psal. 143. 10. Teach me to do thy will: for thou art my God: Let thy good Spirit lead me into the Land of uprightness. Look as it was with the Israelites, when they were passing unto the Land of Canaan, they had the Pillar of fire and cloud going before them, and stir'd no further than that was still a guide and direction unto them. In like manner the Children of God, being to pass in their Pilgrimage to Heaven, they desire, and have need still to be conducted by the Spirit of God, who is a Leader and Guide unto them, and has promised so to be, Esa. 48. 17. I am the Lord thy God, that teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go. And Psal. 23. 2, 3. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He refresheth my Soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, for his Names sake. Still we find mention made of this guiding and teaching of Gods Spirit, which is vouchsafed to the servants of God, even after Conversion. And there is questionless great need of it, in regard of those manifold wandrings and aberrations, which they are still subject unto, through the Reliques of Natural Corruption, still abiding and remaining in them. And so much of the first Particular, observable in this First General, and that is the Property it self, To be led by the Spirit of God, such a thing as this there is.

The Second, Is the Communication of this Property to a Diversity and Plurality of Persons, As many as are led. From whence we may observe thus much: That this being led, and acted, and guided by the Spirit of God, it is not only the Property of one or two particular persons, who are singular and alone by themselves, but it is the condition of a whole Society and Generation of men. There are many of them, that are thus led. Thus Job. 1. 12. As many as received him, to them he gave power, or privilege, to be the Sons of God. Act. 9. 42. Many believed in the Lord. Gal. 6. 16. As many as walk according to this rule, &c. Phil. 3. 15. As many as be Perfect, &c. Still there's mention made of a plurality in this respect. This is not to be taken Comparatively, in reference to other People: for so they are not many but few. The greatest number of persons in the world are carried by another kind of Spirit than this is. But we are to take it simply, and absolutely in it self. There's a variety, and diversity of such persons as are thus guided and carried.

First, In a succession of Times; In one Age after another. There have been alwaies men guided by Gods Spirit, and still are, and alwaies will be. There were so in the times of the Prophets, and there were so in the times of the Apostles, and there are so still in Ours, and will be further to the End of the world: These are called The Generation of them that seek the face of God, Psal. 24. 6. And the Generation of his Children, Psal. 73. 25.

And Secondly, For one and the same time. There are many that go the same way, and are in the like manner inclin'd. And it is requisite to be so, for the positing of those that are contrary: That as there are many which are led by their Lusts, and hurried on by the Spirit of Satan, So there should be many also, which are acted by Grace, and carryed on by the Spirit of God. That as some thrive in wickedness, so others should thrive in goodness, and as Satan enlarges his Kingdom, so the Lord also should increase his.

This may therefore take off the Cavil and Slander which is cast upon Religion

ligion, and the power of Godliness, as a *private and singular* business, as the invention only of some few persons, which they take up to themselves. No, it is no such matter: there are *multitudes, and varieties* of them. Though not so many, as of those that *oppose* it, yet to many, at least, as may serve to *justify* it, and to declare it to be no *private phancy* or conceit, and imagination; that so none may from hence be discouraged from the profession of it. It is conveyed, and communicated to *many*: and that of all sorts, and *ranks, and conditions*: God has his number *every where*, in all kind of places, and persons in the world, one with another: And that even there, now and then, where they are not so easily discerned, as the Lord himself tells the Prophet *Elijah, I have reserved to me ten thousand, who have not bowed their knee to the Image of Baal*, Rom. 11. 4. And that is the *second Particular* here considerable, to wit, the *Communication of this Property*, of being led and guided by Gods Spirit, to a Diversity and Plurality of Persons, *As many as are led.*

The *Third*, Is the *Consent*, or Correspondency of this conduct in this variety: Where *many*, and different Persons are intimated to be guided by one and the *self same Spirit*. *Grace*, it is one and the same for *substance*, in all sorts of Christians: and they are led by the *same Spirit of God*, which is the *worker and preserver* of it in them, there, where it is wrought. Thus Eph. 4. 4. *There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.* 2 Cor. 4. 13. *we having the same Spirit of Faith, according as it is written.* And 1 Cor. 12. 13. *By one Spirit, we are all Baptized into one Body, and have been made all to drink into one Spirit.*

This appears to be so in regard of the *same effects*, which it works in several persons. Where we find the *same operations*, we may conclude there are the *same principles*. Now in the Diversity of Gods Children, we shall find the *same gracious workings*, the same Love of God; the same hatred of sin; the same apprehension, and estimation of spiritual things; and therefore the *same Spirit*. Indeed, there are not these things alwaies in one and the same degree: but for *the thing* they are still the *same*.

Again, They are not neither after one and the *same manner*. *Grace*, though it be in all one for *substance*; yet it is not in all one for *Modification*; for the *ordering and disposing* of it. As in the Body, there is the *same common life* in one man, which there is in another, but differences of *temper and constitution*, according to the several humours which are more *predominant*, and prevailing in them: Even so is it likewise in the *Soul*, as to Religion, and the work of *Grace*; the same in all *fundamentally*, but different: as to the various exercise, and *manner of activity* in it.

Therefore we may from hence make *some Judgement*, and take an account of what Spirit we are, whereby we are carried: If it be indeed the *Spirit of God*, it is the same which is in the rest of Gods Children. The same for *substance*, though not the same, it may be, for *circumstances*, which are annex unto it. Therefore all such Spirits as those, as are *opposite and contrary* hereunto, they are justly to be suspected by us; especially, as to matter of *Holiness*, and Sanctification; wherein, it is alwaies the same in one as it is in another. It is not in *some*, a Spirit of strictness; and in others, a Spirit of looseness; in some, a Spirit of *fear*; and in others, a Spirit of *presumption*: But in all, both one and other: still an *holy and undepled Spirit*.

Again,

Again, This may serve to strengthen us in the *truth and reality* of Religion, that it is not a meer *Notion, and Phancie, and Conceit*, but which has some *substance* in it: because it is that which runs along in *all the Saints*, and is as a kind of second Nature, *abiding and remaining* in them.

And lastly, It should very much persuade and prevail with Christians to mutual Love and Charity to one another, Forasmuch as they are all led by the same *common Spirit*, which does act and move in them, they should from hence learn all of them to have the same mutual affection, *endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit, in the bond of Peace*, as the Apostle Paul seems to urge it, *Eph. 4. 3.* And so again in other places, as *1 Cor. 1. 10.* *That there be no Divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joyned together in the same mind, and in the same Judgement.* Christians that agree in the main, should not divide about smaller matters, and of lesser concernment. As the same Apostle also excellently improves it, in *Phil. 3. 15, 16.* *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, wherunto we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.* And so now I have done, with the First General Part of the Text, which is the *Subject, or Antecedent* of the Proposition, in the Perious here mentioned in these words, *As many as are led by the Spirit of God.*

The *Second*, Is the *Predicate or Consequent* in the Priviledge belonging to these Persons: And that is, in these words, *They are the Sons of God.* Where both parts of the Proposition being joyned, make up to us one *intire Doctrine* and Observation, which is now to be handled, That whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Children of God. Those who have the Spirit of God *inlightening* them with saving truths, and those who have the Spirit of God *inclining* them to *holy performances*; and those that do give themselves up to the *dictates and motions* of the Spirit: these are such as God has honoured with the Name of his *Adopted Children*. This is the expresse Doctrine of the Text it self, in so many words: and so needs no other Scripture besides for confirmation of it.

It may further be cleared and evidenced to us upon these Considerations: First, such as are led by the Spirit, they are undoubtedly, the Children of God: because they have the seed of God remaining in them, as the Apostle John declares it of them, *1 Joh. 3. 9.* Whosoever are Gods Children by *Regeneration*, they are his Children by *Adoption*: and he reckons them, and accounts them as his Children. Now thus it is in the place now alledged with such persons as these that we now speak of: They are regenerate and born again: who hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, saies the Apostle Peter, in *1 Pet. 1. 3.* And *Jam. 1. 18.* *Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his Creatures.* And *1 Pet. 1. 23.* *Born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God that liveth and abideth for ever.* The Spirit going along with the Word is effectual to beget us to God.

Secondly, Those that are led by the Spirit, they are made conformable and like unto God, and have his Image instampt upon them. Children, they resemble their Father, and do carry some similitude unto him: And so do

such as these to God: They do partake of his *Image*, and likeness. To be made after the *Image of God*, is not only to be made *Rational* Creatures, as indued with *reason and understanding*: but to be made *Spiritual* Creatures, as indued with *holiness and grace*. And so the Scripture still sets it, as we may see in *Eph. 4. 23, 24.* and in *Col. 3. 10, &c.* *That ye put on the new man, which after the Image of God is Created in righteousness, and true holiness.* This is proper to those who are led, and conducted by Gods Spirit.

Thirdly, They are *Members of Christ*. Whosoever belong to Christ, who is the *Natural Son of God*: they are consequently themselves the *adopted Sons of God*. And this are they which are led by his Spirit. They are such as are made partakers of Christ: having by Faith laid hold upon him, and thereby being incorporate into him. Thus in *Gal. 3. 26.* *Ye are all the Children of God by Faith, which is in Christ Jesus.* And *Joh. 1. 12.* *As many as received him, to them he gave privilege to become the Sons of God: Even to them that believe on his Name.* Those that walk after the Spirit, they are said expressly to be in Christ Jesus, in *Rom. 8. 1.* Thus we see how in all these respects, *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Children of God.*

Now for a further clearing of this Point still unto us, we may moreover take notice of it in a *twofold* Illustration: The one as holding *Indefinitely*, and the other as holding *Exclusively*. *Indefinitely*, if they be led by Gods Spirit, they are his Children: let them be who they will be. *Exclusively*, if they be not led by his Spirit, what ever they be else, they are none of his Children.

First, Take it *Indefinitely*. If they are such as are led by Gods Spirit, they are his Children, let them be who they will. And that again in a *twofold* Explication: *First*, in the *Indefiniteness of Nations*. And *Secondly*, in the *Indefiniteness of Conditions*. This word *as many*, it carries each of these Latitudes in it.

First, I say an Indefiniteness of Nations: *As many*, whether *Jew or Gentile*: and of *Gentiles*, whether *this or that*. The time was when Gods Grace was more limited and confined to one sort of People, when none could well have been the Children of God, but those only that were the Children of Abraham; and that according to the *Flesh*: when salvation was only of the *Jews*. Yea, but now it is a great deal more enlarged and extended to all People whatsoever: God hath now to the *Gentiles* also granted repentance unto life, as it is in *Act. 11. 18.* There is now no difference of *Greek or Jew, of Circumcision or Uncircumcision, of Barbarian or Scythian*, as St. Paul tells us, *Col. 3. 11.* And again as St. Peter, *Of a truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of Persons: but in every Nation, he that feareth God, and that worketh righteousness, is accepted with him, Act. 10. 34, 35.* This as to the Indefiniteness of Nations.

Secondly, As to an Indefiniteness of Conditions. There is neither high nor low, rich nor poor, learned or unlearned, bond or free, which makes any difference here neither: But *as many as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*: And as many as are led by his Spirit, are accounted his seed. Let mens Persons be what they will be, as to other things: they are Gods Children, if they be led by Gods Spirit. *Nescit Religio Personas, nec Conditiones hominum inspicit, sed animas*, as St. Hierome well. Religion looks not at mens Persons; neither does it regard so much mens Condition, as it does their Hearts.

This

This (for the use of it) is first of all a great Incouragement to *poor despised Christians*, who it may be have no great matters of excellency in the world, but are rejected, and scorned, and undervalued and of no account. Oh but if they be such as have Grace, and are acted by the Spirit of God in them, they are from henceforth the *children of God* as well as the highest and *Greatest* that are. In this, rich and poor, master and servant are equal one with another. Yea many times whiles the former is *rejected*, the latter is *accepted*, and taken in. He is wise with God, that's wise to *salvation*: and he is rich with God, that's rich in good works, God hath chosen even the *poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the Kingdom*, Jam. 2. 5.

Secondly, This teaches us likewise to *own Religion*, wherefoever we find it, let the persons in other respects be what they will be. If they be such as are led by Gods spirit, let us look upon them and esteem them as Gods Children, though it may be differing from us in other particulars. It is the weakness (to say no worse of it) of some kind of people many times to look shiely upon their brethren, and not to acknowledge that Grace which is in them, if they be not every way just of their minds and way, which they have taken up to themselves. If they be not led by their spirit, they will not own them although they be led by the Spirit of God. Now such as these do exceedingly offend against the Generation of Gods Children, and against this Truth which we have here before us, which gives a share in the Sonship of God to all indefinitely that are led by his spirit: howsoever qualified in other regards. The Apostle Paul himself was sometime troubled with such kind of persons as these are, which did traduce him to the *Corinthians* as one that was a Carnal man, and that walked after the flesh, whereby they might weaken the *esteem* of his Ministry amongst them. But he takes them up roundly for it, and asserts his own *Integrity* and share in Grace, with a sharp and pathological expostulation, as we may see there in that place, 2 Cor. 10. 7. *Do ye look on things (says he) after the outward appearance? if any man trust to himself that he is Christs, let him of himself think this again, that as he is Christs, even so are we Christs.* And so much of this Passage, according to the first Illustration, as it may be taken Indefinitely. If they be led by Gods spirit, they are his Children, let them be what they will be, whether we take it as to an Indefiniteness of Nations, or an Indefiniteness of Conditions.

The *Second* is as it may be taken *Exclusively*, If they be not led by his Spirit, whatever they be else, they are none of his Children. This proposition here before us is to be understood *convertibly* and by way of *reciprocation*. *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God*; And again, *As many as are Gods Children, they are such as are led by Gods Spirit*: Whosoever are none of the former, they are none of the latter. There's nothing less than the *Conduct of Gods Spirit* which will intitle one to a state of *Adoption*.

Where still further, that we may handle this passage in the full scope and drift of it, we are to take notice of a *double restriction*, and to take it exclusively according to a twofold reference. *First*, Of the leading of Gods Spirit *restrained to those who are his Children*. None are led by his spirit, but those who are his Children. *Secondly*, Of the *state of Gods children*, *restrained to those who are led by his Spirit*. None are his Children but

those who are led by his Spirit. Of the *leading of Gods Spirit* restrained to those who are his Children, *thus*, As many as are led by the Spirit of God they must be the Children of God, or else not expect to be led by him. Of the state of Gods children restrained to those, who are led by his Spirit, *thus*, As many as will approve themselves to be Gods children, they must see that they be led by Gods Spirit.

First, Take it in the *First reference*, and look upon it so, as a Restraint of the Conduct of Gods Spirit to those alone who are the Children. There are none, who do partake of that, who belong not to *this*. The *leading and guiding of Gods Spirit* is the propriety and peculiarity of Gods Children. This is to be understood especially of such a leading as is *sanctifying and saving*. Worldly men they may sometimes partake of the Conducts of common Providence and have great advantages in that regard: but such a Conduct as whereby men are brought home to Heaven and Salvation, this is vouchsafed to none but those who are regenerate and born again. The meek will be guide in Judgement, and the meek will be teach his way, Psal. 25. 9. And therefore in the same Scripture does David beg this of God upon this Argument, Psal. 25. 5. *Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation, on thee do I wait all the day.*

As for wicked and ungodly men, that refuse to be led by God in those ways wherein he offers to lead them, they are denied to be led by God in such ways as might be most useful to them. But for his children, who give themselves up to him, and own him, and claim an interest in him, these are properly most conducted by him. And this is the *first* exclusive Reference, as it may be taken of the *leading of Gods spirit* restrained to those alone who are Gods Children. As many as are led by the spirit of God, they must be first his Children, or else not expect it. By understanding it especially of such a Leading as is after Conversion.

The *Second Reference*, and which I conceive is principally here intended in the text; is, by taking it of the state of Gods Children restrained to those who are led by Gods Spirit. As many as will approve themselves for his Children, they must see that they are led by his Spirit. And so it does (as I said) exclude all from being of the number of the Children of God and of having an interest in the state of Adoption, who are not in deed, and in good earnest partakers of this *spiritual Conduct*. If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his, Rom. 8. 9. And here again two more, *First*, Who are led by a different spirit: and they are excluded as defective. *Secondly*, As are led by an opposite spirit: and they are excluded as destructive.

First, I say, Who are led by a Different Spirit, and they are excluded as Defective. By a Different spirit: that is, by the Spirit of God, but in a Different notion and Consideration of it from what is here intended. For a man (as I in part hinted before) may be in some sort and respect said to be acted by the spirit of God, and yet for all that not prove to be a Child of God. And that again according to a twofold explication. *First*, In the Common gifts of it. And *Secondly*, In the Common works of it: when it is the Spirit which men are led by, but only in one of these notions, it does not necessarily infer with it a state of Adoption.

First, The Spirit in the Common gifts of it: By taking it so, men may have a large measure of these; as they are described and set forth in 1 Cor. 12. The spirit of wisdom, and the spirit of knowledge, and the spirit of utterance, and the spirit

Spirit of Government; and the like: and yet for all that be none of the Children of God. There are divers instances of it in sundry persons, both in *Scripture* and *daily observation*, where the worst men that are have sometimes been partakers of them; and sometimes more than others. Such as these, they may make men plausible with men; but they do not make them acceptable to God, nor do imply his *Acceptance* of them in any saving, or gracious *Consideration*; that so none may please or satisfy themselves in the solitary enjoyment of them without somewhat beside. A man as to common abilities may be endued with the *Spirit of God*; and yet for all that be a Child of the Devil. The *Spirit* if we take it only thus, is excluded as *Defective* in this Particular.

Secondly, As the *Spirit* in the Common gifts of it, so the *Spirit* also in the Common works of it, it is here defective likewise: as there are divers and sundry of them observable to this purpose: as Common conviction, Legal sorrow, fear of punishment, desire of pardon; Morality and Civility, and Ingenuity, and sweetness of Disposition in a natural way. These are such things as have the *Spirit of God* for the Author and worker of them: and those that are partakers of them, they may be so far forth said to be led by the *Spirit*; but it does not from hence presently follow that they are therefore Gods Children, unless that moreover they have a further work wrought in their hearts, and are partakers of the Holiness of Christ. Those who are led by a Different *Spirit*, they are excluded from the state of Adoption, considered as *Defective*, Different from the *Spirit of Holiness*; as expressing it self: but in its common gifts, and its common works.

But Secondly, Those who are led by an Opposite *Spirit*, they are excluded from the state of Adoption, considered as *Destructive*. Those that are led by the Evil *Spirit*, to be sure are none of this number. Now this, it may be reduced to three Heads: First, The *Spirit of Satan*. Secondly, The *Spirit of the world*. Thirdly, Their own *Spirit*, so far as Corrupt.

First, As many as are led by the *Spirit of Satan*, are none of Gods Children. God, and the Devil are so opposite and contrary one to the other, that as those, who are led by Gods *Spirit*, are not the Children of Satan; so those who are led by Satans *Spirit* are not the Children of God: as we find it in 1 Joh. 3. 10. In this are the children of God manifest, and the children of the Devil; whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God; that is, whosoever is not led by the *Spirit of God*: and the other part is to be supplied, and made up: But he is led by the *Spirit of the Devil*. Concerning this leading we find mention made by the Apostle Paul speaking to the Ephesians, what they were before their Conversion, Ephes. 2. 2. He tells them, how they walked according to the Prince of the power of the air, the *Spirit that now works in the Children of disobedience*. There are some kind of people in the world whom the Devil rules and bears sway in them, and carries them whithersoever he pleases, who are led captive by him at his will, as it is in 2 Tim. 2. 26. It is said of Judas, that Satan entred into him, Joh. 13. 27. And of Ananias, that Satan had filled his heart, Act. 5. 3. and so it is with many others in the like manner beside.

Especially some kind of sinners amongst the rest. Thus it is with proud persons, they are said to fall into the *Condemnation of the Devil*; as being the sin which he was first of all condemned for, 1 Tim. 3. 6. And so Envious Persons; especially such as malign the virtues and graces of others, they are with Cain of that wicked one, in vs 11, 1 Joh. 3. 12. And Elymas the

the Sorcerer upon this account a Child of the Devil, because he perverted the ways of God, and hindred the conversion of others, *Acts* 13. 10, &c. And so for *Lyers*, they are acted by the *same spirit also*, as it is said before of *Ananias*, lying to the Holy Ghost. It was *Satan* that had taught him to do so. And the *lying Jews*, our Saviour tells them that they were of their *Father the Devil*, who was a *Liar* from the beginning, *Joh.* 8. 44. That's the first opposite spirit, *viz.* the spirit of *Satan*.

The *Second* is the spirit of *the world*. This is *another* kind of spirit which the Scripture points at, as contrary to the *spirit of God* and *his children*. Thus *1 Cor.* 2. 12. *We have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God.* Where, by the spirit of the world we may understand *two things*; Either the spirit of the *men* of the world, or else a *worldly spirit*; the latter whereof is that which we here *principally* aim at. Those who are led by this, they are not the *children of God*.

Now who are they? This will best be known and discovered by considering what *the world it self* is. And the Apostle *St. John* is best able to give us an account of *that*, who has most fully described it to us in *1 John* 2. 16. *For all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the Eyes and the pride of Life.* Under the lust of *the Flesh* is contained a *Voluptuous* spirit; under the lust of the *Eyes* is contained a *Covetous* spirit; under *the pride of life* is contained an *Ambitious* spirit; so that those that lye under the guilt of either of these lusts, they are from hence concluded to be led by *the spirit of the world*.

First, Voluptuous persons. They come within the reach of this censure; who are lovers of *pleasures*, more than *lovers of God*. *ἡδονὰς μᾶλλον ἢ θεοῦ*, *2 Tim.* 3. 4. And abundance of these there are at this time especially in the world, who wait only upon *their worldly delights*; that spend their days in vanity, and sinful recreations which suck up the very strength and marrow of their souls and spirits in them. How can such lay any claim to Gods Children, who are so transported by a spirit of the world?

Secondly, Covetous Persons. They are acted by the same spirit likewise. Who mind only *earthly things*, as the Apostle describes them. *τὰ ἐγγύα φροῦδου*, *Phil.* 3. 19. Such as these give but little evidence of being *the children of God*, but fall into temptation and a snare, and many *foolish and hurtful lusts*.

Thirdly, Ambitious Persons. Which are carryed away with the pomp and glory of the world, and have their hearts set upon *that*: these are also led by the same spirit. This was *Balaam's* bait, when he was promised to be promoted to *great honour*. This was the *Pharisees* humour, who affected precedence and height of *place*. This was the temper of *Diotrophes*, that loved to have the preeminence. And so it is also of many others besides, who are guilty of the like Affections, all led by the spirit of *the world*. And that's also a *second* kind of spirit, which is opposite to this *spirit of God*.

The Third and last is mans *own Spirit*, so far forth as *corrupt and unregenerate*. When men are too much addicted to *themselves* and their own *Corrupt wills and inclinations*; are slaves to their *own passions*, and disordered, and distempered Affections: then they are properly said to be led by a *spirit of their own*; and so far forth not to be led by the spirit of *God*. And thus we have seen how as this passage holds *indefinitely*, so it holds *exclusively*. Whosoever are led by Gods spirit are the Children of God: And who-

soever

soever are not led by his spirit, they are none of his Children ; which are led only by a *Different* spirit in the *Common Gifts* and workings of it ; and who are led by an opposite spirit in all the particular Enumerations, The spirit of *Satan* ; the spirit of the world ; and their *own* spirit so far forth as corrupt.

Now the use and Application of all to our selves comes to this. *First*, As matter of Comfort and Encouragement to all such persons as do find this *Conduct and leading in themselves*, such as are guided and carried by the holy Spirit of God working in them and disposing them to that which is good. This may satisfy them as concerning their state and condition in reference to God as being his Children. It is not what occasional weaknesses or failings and infirmities which may be in them : But what it is that leads them and rules them, and bears sway and prevails with them. If it be indeed the *spirit* of God, they may then conclude they *belong* to God, and are such as have an Interest in him. And he will accordingly *own* them, and accept of them, and take them for his at *another Day*.

We see here (by the way) that it is possible for the Children of God in this life to be in some manner assured of their present state, and future salvation. The proposition, that's here in the word, *As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the Children of God*. The *Assumption*, that's in the Heart and Conscience of a Believer reflecting upon it self, *But I am led by Gods spirit*. The Conclusion, that follows from both, *Therefore, I am the Child of God*. This is that, which Christians should lay hold on and make use of both against *Satans Temptations* and discouraging suggestions : as also against all opposite opinions of such as deny such a Truth as this is, and do oppose it, and call it into question. Whatever is here written to this purpose, it is written for our learning, that we through comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, as the Apostle speaks, *Rom. 15. 4*.

Secondly, Here's matter of Terror to all those whom it is otherwise with, who are not led by the *Spirit of God*, as we have now explained it to you. Surely, what ever they may think of themselves, they are from henceforth none of his Children, nor can comfortably persuade themselves of it. Look how far forth any are carried by a spirit of pride, and envy, and worldliness, and carnality and the like, so much the farther are they from being led by the *spirit of God*, and so consequently from being in the number of the Children of God. *Such wisdom descends not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish*, as the Apostle St. James tells us in *Jam. 3. 14, 15, &c.*

And those likewise that have no more but a *Common and ordinary* spirit in them of Civility and Morality and the like, they are upon the same account also excluded from such a leading as is here commended unto us. *If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his*.

Therefore again, in the *Third place*, we see what great cause we have to try our own spirits, as well as others whether they be of God, or no ; and to know of what spirit we are. There are not the best that are but they may sometimes in temptation have too much of the evil spirit in them. But what's the *Spirit* whereby we are led ? and which does more constantly prevail upon us ? This were very well to be searched and enquired into by us.

Now this being led of the *spirit of God* may be very much judged of by us from these observations. *First*, By our Delight in the word of God, and our conformity and agreeableness to that, Gods Spirit and his Word, they are

are suitable and correspondent one to the other: so that those, who are led by *that*, they comply with *thus*. The spirit of God in the *Scripture*, and the spirit of God in the *Ministry*. Those that undervalue *thus*, they are not guided by *that*. *He that despiseth, he despiseth not man but God, who hath also given us his holy Spirit*, says the Apostle Paul to this purpose, in 1 *Thes.* 4. 8.

Secondly, By the goodness of the ways themselves in which we converse; we find these two joyn'd together, in *Ezek.* 36. 27, 28. *I will put my spirit into you, and cause ye to walk in my statutes, and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God*; where both the Spirit of God is made a note of the People of God, which is the main Doctrine of the Text: and likewise the walking in the statutes of God is made a concomitant of the Spirit of God, as put into us. And so also the Apostle Paul, *Gal.* 5. 25. *If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit*; that is, if we have a principle of spiritual life in us, let us have suitably a spiritual conversation.

Thirdly, By our cheerfulness and activity in the wayes of God. The Spirit of God it is a spirit of Power and a spirit of strength, which does put nimbleness and quickness into those who are made partakers of it. *where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17. *I will run the wayes of thy Commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart*, *Psal.* 119. 32.

And then lastly, as a Concomitant; and that which is annext hereunto. If we be led by the spirit, we shall be tender of grieving the spirit, and doing any thing, which may be offensive to him. There's no wise man, who would offend his Guide, whom he depends upon for safety and direction. No more will those who are spiritually-wise willingly grieve or displease the Holy spirit, who does the office of a Conduſt unto them. By these and such like observations may we discern this in our selves, whether or no we are led by the Spirit: and finding our selves to be so, from thence conclude our selves to be Gods children, which is a necessary consequent upon it as is here declared in this Text. *For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.*

S E R M O N X V I I .

ROMANS 8. 15.

For ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear ; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

There is nothing, which is of greater concernment to Gods Children to be made good unto them, than that, indeed, they are his Children, which is the Ground and Foundation of all other comforts to them, which are bestowed upon them : And especially, of the greatest happiness and blessing of all others besides : which is Eternal Life. Their Inheritance, it depends upon their Relation. That they may be Heirs, they must first of all be Sons. Therefore the Apostle Paul in this Scripture which we have here again before us, does so insist upon the proof and confirmation of this Point unto us, As many as are led by his Spirit, to declare that they are his Childten ; which he does from that which is further considerable in them, as annexed and pertinent hereunto.

THese words are a Proof, that the believing *Romans*, to whom the Apostle Paul writ this *Epistle*, were indeed the *Children of God* ; which he makes good from a *proper Consequent*, and *Adjunct* thereof, laid down after a *twofold* manner of Proposition : which may serve to make up to us the *parts* of the *Text*. First, *Negatively*, They had not received the *Spirit of Bondage again to fear*. Secondly, *Affirmatively*, But they had received the *Spirit of Adoption*, whereby they cry'd, *Abba, Father*.

We begin in order with the *first* of these parts, *viz. The Negative Proposition, Ye have not received, &c.* Out of which words as they lie here before us, there are two main Points observable of us : *First*, that there is a *Spirit of bondage*, which Gods Children for some time have received, *working fear in them*. Secondly, that this *Spirit of Bondage*, where it is once followed by the *Spirit of Adoption* is, received *no more again* by them.

First, I say, there is a *Spirit of Bondage*, which Gods Children for some time have received, working fear in them. When we speak of the *Spirit of Bondage* (to explain it a little unto you) we must know that it is not *substantially* distinct from the *Spirit of Adoption*, but in that respect *one and the same*. It is not a different Spirit for *person*, but only for *operation*. The same *holy Spirit of God* is in different persons, and at different times, both

one and t'other. Now the former, *viz.* *The spirit of bondage*, it does seem to imply three things in it.

First, That *state of servitude*, which the People of God were under, in the time of the *Ceremonial Law*, when as they were in *bondage to legal Ordinances*, and *Jewish Rites*. This is that, which the Apostle makes mention of in *Gal. 4.* from *vers. 1.* to the 8th. *when we were Children, we were in bondage to the Elements of the world*, &c. And in *vers. 9.* He chides them for desiring to return to this *servitude again*; *Forasmuch as they were Sons*, and God had sent the *Spirit of his Son into their hearts*, as was signified in that Chapter. They were now no more under the engagement of those Carnal, and Judaical constitutions, which before they were bound unto.

Secondly, The *spirit of bondage*, it does comprehend in it the *manner of publishing of the Moral Law* upon Mount Sinai; which (as we know) was with *horror and fear*, as we may see in *Exod. 19.* and *20.* Which the Apostle also makes mention of, *Heb. 12. 18.* &c. This it is compared with the *Gospel*, which is delivered with a great deal *more sweetness*, and upon *better and more comfortable Conditions*. The Condition of the Legal Covenant runs thus: *Do this and Live. Perfectly fulfill the Commandment, and thou shalt have Eternal Life.* This now is an *hard bargain*; whiles we consider that now we are no way able to do it, as having lost our power in *Adam*. And this because it *speaketh guilt*, it *worketh fear*. According to that again of the Apostle, *Gal. 4. 24.* The Covenant which is from mount Sinai, it *gendreth to bondage*, because it makes them to be *Bondmen*, who look to be *saved and justified* by it, as convincing them of *their sin*, and *deserving of eternal wrath*. Whereas the Gospel is a *Covenant of Grace and favour*, and *Reconciliation through Christ*. And thus now the *Believing Romans*, and in them all other good *Christians*, are said not to have received any more the *spirit of bondage*, that is, not to be now under the thralldom and slavery, and servitude, and severity of the Law; consider'd as threatening *Death and condemnation* unto them: which they are now *free* from by their interest in the *Mediator*.

Thirdly, Which is principally to be considered, and which I desire now chiefly to insist on, *The spirit of bondage*, it does point out to us the state and condition of a *Believer* before his Conversion, which it pleases God to bring him into as preparatory to his Conversion. And so it is in brief thus much: namely, That state of *horror, and fear, and astonishment*, and *slavish dread*, which by the Ministry of the Law, convincing men of *sin, and death*, the *Spirit of God* does work in mens Hearts and Consciences; whereby as of an *angry Judge* they stand in awe of him; and out of the *sense of guilt* do fly and run away from him. Now such a *Spirit of bondage* as this there is in the world. And that as we may take notice of it in two sorts of Persons: *First* of all in those that are *Reprobates*, and who yet never came home to God. *Secondly*, in those also who are *Elect*, and who are in due time *effectually converted*: It is observable in both.

First, The *Spirit of Bondage*, it may be sometimes in meet *reprobate Persons*, and such as are never *effectually converted*. These may, through the *Preaching of the Law*, and the *laying open* of sin unto them, have such an *horror and astonishment of spirit*, as may make them, from the *apprehending* of themselves as subject to *Eternal Condemnation*, to be in a *servile and slavish*

slavish Condition; as *Cain*, and *Eſau*, and *Saul*, and *Judas*, and the like. All *ſight of ſin and miſery* is not preſently an *Argument* of *Conversion*, though in the nature of the thing it ſelf, it may be a *tendency and preparative* to it. But it may now and then and in ſome ſort be in ſuch Perſons, as ſhall never be ſaved. But,

Secondly, As it is ſometimes in thoſe who are meer *Reprobates*; ſo is it alſo in thoſe who are *Elect*, as an *Introduction* to their following *Conversion*. All the *Saints* and *Servants* of *God*, who have been ever, eſpecially in *riper years*, brought home to *Chriſt*, they have had the *Spirit of Bondage*, more or leſs, and in ſome degree in them, that is, ſuch a work upon their ſouls, as whereby to ſee, and feel ſin to be the greateſt evil that is, and *themſelves* whiles under the power of it, to be in a moſt ſad and *miſerable condition*. *Joh. 16. 8.* It is ſaid, that *when the Spirit is come, he will convince the world of ſin*; and this *conviction*, it is moſt neceſſary. The apprehenſion of *miſery*, before the participation of *mercy*. It is the *method* which *God* ordinarily uſes, for the converting and reducing, and bringing home of any perſons to himſelf. *He breaks up the fallow ground of their hearts, that he may not ſow among thorns*, *Jer. 4. 4.* Thus it was with *St. Peters Converts Act. 2. 37.* *They were pricked at their hearts*; and then they asked, *what ſhall we do?* And the *Jayler* he was firſt poſſeſſed with a *Spirit of trembling*, and then he demanded of the *Apoſtle*, *Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved?* Yea, *Paul* himſelf, he was firſt *ſtruck from his Horſe*, to the ground: and then trembling, and aſtoniſhed he ſaid, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* In theſe, and many more, has the *Spirit of Adoption* been uſher'd in with the *ſpirit of bondage*: As *Plowing* prepares for *Sowing*; and as the *Needle* makes way for the *Thread*. And there is great cauſe and reaſon for it in ſundry reſpects.

First, Becauſe *otherwiſe* Men will not leave or part with their *ſins*. There is ſuch a near and cloſe league betwixt a *natural* man and his *luſts*, as that they are not *easily ſever'd* from each other. There muſt be ſomewhat more than ordinary to remove him, and take him off from them. Now this is not done but by making his *ſins bitter* to him, and convincing him of the evil that is in them. *Corrupt nature* it will be ſtill *hankering* after that which is moſt ſuitable to it, till it meets with ſomewhat elſe, which may divorce it, and divide it from it. Now this is done by this *ſpirit of bondage* whereof we now ſpeak, which makes ſin the *more tedious* to the ſinner.

Secondly, As to make men *hate ſin*; ſo alſo to love *Chriſt*, which is as needful for them likewiſe to do. That which is lightly come by, is for the moſt part lightly eſteemed. The *whole* have no need of the *Phyſitian*, but they that are *ſick*. If men might have *Heaven* and *Salvation* eaſily, and without *ſight of miſery*, they would not put any great price upon it, nor think any great matter of that *Love*, which has *purchase* and obtained it. But now the *ſight of their danger* makes them a great deal more ſenſible of their deliverance; which it is very requiſite they ſhould be ſenſible of.

Thirdly, To make them more *real and ſubſtantial* in the waies of *Religion*, and fruitful in every good work. When men take up *Chriſtianity* thus, it ſticks ſo much the longer by them than *otherwiſe* it would be ready to do. It makes them to be ſo much the more ſound and ſolid *Chriſtians*. Fitter, either to do or ſuffer whatſoever *God* calls for at their hands, and requires of them.

The Consideration of this Point may serve to take off mens prejudices, and misconceits in this particular. There are many that count trouble of Spirit for sin, to be nothing but melancholy, and fancy, and the like, as if there were no truth or reality in it. Now such as these are here convinced of the contrary, as being a work of the Spirit of God himself, and so to be accounted by them: Even that which is here call'd and denominated the *spirit of bondage*.

And accordingly should Christians consider how far forth they have partak'd of it *themselves*, which (as we have heard) is more or less observable in all such persons as are brought home to Christ.

Indeed, that we may rightly conceive of it, there's a Difference in Diversity of persons: For in some it is after a more *eminent and conspicuous* manner: In others it is with less observation, but yet all have their *share* in it: And we may take notice of *each* kind of persons.

First, I say there are some in whom this work of the Spirit of Bondage is more eminent and *conspicuous*, as it pleases God in his wisdom to order it, and to dispose it unto them. As to instance in some few particulars.

First, Such as have been formerly of a more loose, dissolute carriage; and have been more openly, and notoriously wicked, &c. Great and notorious sinners are not usually, and for the most part Converted without great and notorious Humiliation; as their lives have been more scandalous, so is their Repentance to be the more *conspicuous*, and there is some suitableness and congruity in it, why it should be so: As in those examples which we mentioned before. The Jews that had been the *Actual and immediate Crucifiers of Christ*. St. Paul, that had been a Blasphemer and Persecutor of the Church of Christ. The Jayler, that had been a Barbarous Enemy, and Executioner of the Apostles of Christ. Such as these, it was requisite that their sins should be more feelingly and effectually laid to their hearts.

Secondly, As persons of greater scandal; so sometimes likewise on the other side, of greater *privacy, and closeness in sinning*. Those that have gone on for sometime in a secret way of sin and wickedness, when they begin once to be awakened, they have greater trouble and disquiet in their Consciences, God meets with them in the work of Humiliation, for all their former favouring of themselves in such *Courses* as these are, which prove more grievous and tedious unto them: And so such as have been too confident of their own righteousness, Pharisees, &c.

Thirdly, Where God intends men for some more special work and service. Where he purposes to raise an high building, he digs a deep and low Foundation: And prepares them for great employments, by great humblings and breakings of Spirit. Thus we see how this work of Humiliation is in some persons more eminent and conspicuous; and with greater observation.

But now again for some others, in them this work is more *secret and hidden*, and has not altogether that *violence* with it. There are some, whom it pleases the Lord to work the seeds of Grace in *betimes*, in their younger years: Following them with all the opportunities of a *Godly and Religious Education*, whereby they have good Principles dropt and instill'd into them; and who have a discovery both of their misery and remedy in a manner all at once: Now in such as these, this work which we now speak of, is not so eminent and notorious in them; but yet even these are brought to that temper, as to see and feel themselves, without Christ, in a wretched and

and forlorn condition : which is the *substance* of that which is here called the *spirit of bondage*. And so much for that first Point. That there is indeed in reality such a thing as this is ; The Spirit of *Bondage* antecedent to the Spirit of *Adoption*.

The *Second* is this, That this Spirit of *Bondage*, where it is once followed with the Spirit of *Adoption*, it is there received no more again. Gods Children when they are once *Converted*, they are delivered from that slavish and servile condition, which they were sometime in before Conversion. Thus it is here in the Text : *Ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear*. This must needs be so upon a twofold Consideration.

First, In regard of that state and condition which *Christ* has purchast for those who are brought under the *Power and Government* of the Gospel : And that is a state of *freedom* and *Christian liberty*. Not as many would make it of *licentiousness*, to live as they list, which is not *liberty*, but *bondage* rather ; yea, the *greatest* Bondage that is : But of *Freedom*, as from the guilt and power of *sin* ; so from the *Fear of Hell and Death*, and the *Tyranny and Dominion of Satan* : This the Gospel hath freed those from, who have submitted to the efficacy of it : And they are no more subject to that fear which they have been in before their Conversion. *Luk. 1. 74. That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies might serve him without fear, all the days of our Life*. So *Heb. 2. 15. That he might deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage*. *Rom. 6. 14. Sin shall not have dominion over you : for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace*. And *Gal. 5. 18: If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the Law*, that is, (as we have formerly explained it) under the *Tyranny and Terrifyings* of it.

Secondly, As it is unsuitable to the state of *Christian liberty*, so it is also unsuitable to the nature of the *Spirit of Adoption*, which we shall speak of more afterwards. The Spirit of *Adoption*, which is the Spirit of a *Son*, and *Heir* ; and the Spirit of *Bondage*, which is the Spirit of a *Servant and Slave* : These two are plainly *inconsistent*, and contrary the one to the other. This is intimated to us by the Apostle *John, 1. 4. 18. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear : because fear hath torment : he that feareth, is not made perfect in love*. The state of *Adoption*, that's a state of *Love* ; the state of *Bondage*, that's a state of *Fear* : therefore it will from hence follow, that this must needs cast out that. Look, as where *Love* is perfect, there cannot be fear at all ; so where *Love* is in any degree, there cannot be fear in perfection. So then, because where ever there is the Spirit of *Adoption*, there is consequently the Spirit of *Love* : therefore where ever there is the Spirit of *Adoption*, there cannot be with it the Spirit of *Bondage*.

But against this may be haply objected ; That many of Gods dear Children, and who, no doubt, are in a state of *Adoption*, yet are now and then fill'd with doubtings, and fears in them, and are oftentimes in very sad conditions, as to the apprehension of *sin and wrath*.

To this I answer in a word ; That we must here carefully distinguish betwixt the Spirit of *Bondage*, and the Spirit of *Desertion*. The Children of God, after Conversion, may be exercised with the latter, but yet are not subject to the former. These two are thus far distinguished one from the other. That the Spirit of *Bondage* makes those persons, who for the present are under

under it, to apprehend themselves lost, and for the present in a damn'd condition: And that not merely *neither* to apprehend it, from a conceit of their *own*: but to apprehend it upon *just and right grounds*, which are set home upon the *Conscience*, by the work of the Spirit of God *himself*. But in a state of *Desertion*, though God does *privatively*, or *negatively* withdraw such a *manifest influence* of his Grace and Comfort: Yet he does never *positively* declare to a Christian, that he is in a state of *wrath*, though he does suffer him for his own particular, so to apprehend and *mis-conceive* of himself. But there is still a secret hand of Gods Spirit, which does uphold and support the Soul in such a condition. And if they have any thoughts of Despair in them, it is not from the *suggestion* of Gods Spirit, but from the corruption and mis-giving of their *own*; whereas in the Spirit of Bondage, the Spirit of God inlightens mens own Spirit, to see the wretchedness and miserableness of their own Condition: and does also *amplifie* it, and inlarge it in their Conscience. The Spirit of Adoption, it may go together with the Spirit of *Desertion*; but not with the Spirit of *Bondage*: Where that is once *vouchsafed*, this is utterly scatter'd, and removed, which is matter of great comfort and consolation to all those who are made *partakers* of it. So much for that. And so I have done with the first General Part of the Text, which is the Property of these Believers laid down in the *Negative Proposition*, *Ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again*, &c.

The *Second* is, as express in the *Affirmative*, *But ye have received the Spirit of Adoption*, whereby we cry, *Abba, Father*: Wherein again we have two *Branches* more: *First*, the *Priviledge* mentioned. *Secondly*, the proper effect, or consequent of this *Priviledge*. The *Priviledge* it self, that is express in these words, *But ye have received the Spirit of Adoption*: The effect of this *Priviledge*, that is express in these, whereby we cry, *Abba, Father*.

We begin with the *First*, viz. The *Priviledge* it self, *But ye have received the Spirit of Adoption*. Gods *Elect* and *Chosen* Children, they are not *alwaies* or *only* under the Spirit of servitude and bondage, as it falls out sometimes to the *Reprobate*; but having been for some time under the Spirit of *Bondage*, by way of *introduction* and *preparation*, they have afterwards the Spirit of *Adoption* conferred upon them. This is that which is here signified unto us. Thus also in that *Scripture*, which is almost *parallel* to this place, in *Gal. 4. 5, 6.* God sent forth his Son into the world, that we might receive the *Adoption* of Sons; And because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, *Abba, Father*. For the better opening of this present passage, which we have now before us, there are two things, especially, which are pertinently to be inquired into by us: *First*, what is meant by this Spirit of *Adoption*, which is here spoken of. *Secondly*, how Believers do receive it, and are made *partakers* of it?

For the *First*, *Adoption*, in the Greek *simila*, it is in the proper *Notion* of it, the taking of any person into the *relation* of a Son, who was before a *Stranger*: And it is commonly done by those who have otherwise no Children of their own. Being applyed to God, it is his making of those his Sons by *Grace* and *special favor*, who were none of his Sons by *Nature*. Now it is called the Spirit of *Adoption*, both because the Spirit works it and effects it in us: As also because the Spirit does *testifie* it, and assure it unto

us. It is the *holy Spirit of God* whereby we are taken into the condition of Gods children. And it is the same spirit, whereby we are *certified* of this condition; and have it cleared, and evidenced unto us. This for the first inquiry, what is here meant by the spirit of Adoption.

The *Second* is, How those who are true Believers come to receive it, and to be made partakers of it, as is here exprest. *Ye have received the spirit of Adoption.* And here again there are two things; First, The means of its working. Secondly, The manner of its proceeding.

For the *Former*, viz. The means: we must know that this is wrought *instrumentally* by the publishing and preaching of the Gospel, and the laying open of the riches of Christ in that Dispensation. Look, as the spirit of Bondage is conveyed by the preaching of the Law, so is the spirit of Adoption conveyed by the preaching of the Gospel. Therefore it is called *Emphatically* the *ministration of the Spirit*, in 2 Cor. 3. 8. And the Apostle writing to the Galatians thus expostulates with them. *Received ye the spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?* Gal. 3. 2. *The spirit comes by the hearing of Faith*; and that is the Gospel. This is the means whereby it is wrought.

Now Secondly, For the manner of its proceeding, we must take heed here of setting bounds and limits to the Almighty himself. How long any should stay and abide under the spirit of Bondage till the spirit of Adoption come into him, is a thing which cannot be determined; but falls out as it pleases God to order it in a diversity and variety of Persons; In some the work is quicker, in others the work is slower, according to the several necessities of the Parties which are the subjects of it. Only we may observe thus much, that in the ordinary proceeding of it, it is still subsequent to the spirit of Bondage.

And the steps and degrees of it are these: First, There is wrought in the soul, thus humbled and prepared by the Law, an earnest desire and longing after Christ who is revealed in the Gospel. And that without any rest or satisfaction till the soul hath obtained him.

Secondly, There's an humble acknowledgement of a mans own unworthiness; and a willingness to part with any thing, or to do any thing for the receiving of him. Till a man be once brought to this, there is little hope of his coming to Christ, or of having any Interest in him.

Thirdly, There is on Gods part a giving or tendering of Christ to such a person, for all those purposes whereunto he is available: For wisdom and righteousness and sanctification, and Redemption. To be all in all unto him.

Fourthly, There is a receiving of Christ on the Believers part himself, which is wrought by the powerful work of the Spirit of God upon him. And this consent makes up the match.

Lastly, There is a Comfortable Assurance, and Evidence and Persuasion made to the heart, of the truth and reality of these things; both on Gods part, and a Christians. And this, it breeds a great deal of peace and freedom, and tranquillity of spirit with it. By these and the like steps and degrees may we conceive how the spirit of Adoption is wrought in a Believer, which is the second thing here considerable; how Christians come to receive it, and to be partakers of it. The spirit of Adoption does not only imply the state it self, but also the Assurance of this state unto us; which together with the state it self, is, as I noted before,

before, wrought in us by the spirit of God. But this I shall not now enlarge upon, as deferring it to the following verse with Gods assistance to be handled by us, where this point will be more proper and seasonable. Only we may briefly take notice of the Grounds of it, as they are exhibited in Scripture.

First, Election: Ephes. 1. 5, 6. *Having predestinated us to the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will to the Glory and praise of his Grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.* Our Adoption it is founded upon our election; that is, upon the Eternal purpose and Decree of God himself towards us. And therefore it is also sure and stedfast. According to that again of the same Apostle, in 2 Tim. 2. 19. *The Foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.*

Secondly, As it is founded upon our Election, so it is also founded upon our Redemption, and the Obedience of the Son of God. Therefore it is added, Ephes. 1. 7. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.* Having made mention of our Election to this Adoption, he presently inferrs our Redemption as pertinent hereunto likewise. And so Gal. 4. 5. *When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, &c. To redeem them that were under the Law; that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.* We receive the Adoption of Sons by Christs redeeming us from the curse of the Law.

Thirdly, The sealing of the Spirit, that's another strengthening, and confirming of our Adoption to us, whereupon we may safely build the certainty of it. Thus Ephes. 1. 13. *In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise.* So Rom. 5. 5. *The Love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.* And here now again in this very Scripture before us, *The self same Spirit beareth witness to our spirits, that we are the Children of God.*

The Use of all to our selves comes to this. Namely as matter of great comfort and Incouragement to all true Christians and Believers, who are partakers of this state, and spirit whereof we now speak; of Adoption, and of the spirit of Adoption, both as making them and assuring them to be the sons and daughters of God. Here is that which may very much affect them with joy and rejoycing of souls. As the Apostle John makes the Exclamation. *Behold, what manner of love, the father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God.* For what now upon this account can be wanting to us? Here is honour and profit and safety and provision and instruction, and whatever can be thought of as desirable or pursuable of us. This is that which makes us fit guests at Gods Table, &c. And so much may be spoken of the first Particular in this Second General, which is the Priviledge it self here mentioned; in these words, *But ye have received the spirit of Adoption.*

The Second is the Proper Effect or Consequent of this Priviledge; That we have in these words, *whereby we cry Abba Father.* Wherein again there are two things further considerable. *First,* The immediate property and result of the spirit of Adoption; and that is, to cry. *Secondly,* The proper Nature, and Essence of prayer; and that is to cry, *Abba, Father.*

First,

First, We have here the immediate property and result of the Spirit of Adoption: And that is to cry. From whence we may observe thus much; That the Spirit of Adoption is inseparably the Spirit of Prayer. Whosoever have the Spirit of God assuring them, that they are his children, they have also the same holy Spirit enabling them in an holy manner to call upon him. And whosoever do rightly call upon him, they do it from the Spirit of Adoption, which God has given them. This is plainly signified in that place of Scripture before alledged, in Gal. 4. 6. where it is said, *That because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his son into your hearts, crying Abba Father: Mark, because ye are sons.* There's nothing more proper to sons, than to have recourse to their Father, for what they want. And so there's nothing more proper to Gods children, than to have access to him by prayer; where the Spirit of God proceeds by these degrees. *First*, He assures us that indeed we are the sons and daughters of God. *Secondly*, He persuades us of his Ability, and willingness, and readiness to help us. *Thirdly*, He stirs up such Desires in our selves, as whereby we are carried to him for help.

This then may serve as a Discovery to us, whether we are the children of God, or no: As many as are Gods children, they are enabled to call upon him, and to go to him, as theirs. And again none are able to do so, but only those who are indeed his children. We see, how it is here in the world; The first thing that ye teach Children, is to cry Father, and Mother, as it is in Esai. 8. 4. And so it is likewise the first thing, which Gods Spirit teaches the children of God: Others may do it formally, but none can do it spiritually but these. *No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 12. 3.* So no man can say that God is his father, but by the same Spirit also.

Therefore it should also further provoke us, to keep this Spirit of Adoption up in us; that is, to preserve us still in an Assurance and persuasion of the love of God towards us that we are his children, and in favour with him, that so upon all occasions we may with boldness come unto him; As considering the Great advantage, which hereby comes unto us. For he that has this Spirit, he has with it all things in it; because he has that which will procure all things to him, as we may gather from that place in Luk. 11. 13. where the giving of the Spirit is made equivalent to the giving of all other things else besides.

But yet further, that we may know in what manner, it is exprest here by crying, and so forth, that is, with fervency of Spirit. The Spirit of Adoption in Gods Children, as it is a Spirit of Invocation, so it is also a Spirit of Importunity. Those who are the Lords remembrancers keep no silence and give him no rest, Esa. 62. 6, 7. And the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avayleth much, James. 5. 16. As it is said of our Blessed Saviour, that he offered up prayers with strong crying and tears, Heb. 5. 7. which condemns all heartlessness and deadness in such kind of performances.

And then again; Observe, we cry, in the change of the Person. To note unto us the joynt consent which is in all the people of God to this purpose, as likewise their united and common interest in this Spirit of Adoption. That's the first thing here considerable of us, viz. The Property of the Spirit of Adoption; And that is to Cry.

The *Second* is the *Nature and Essence of Prayer*; and that is to cry *Abba Father*. This is the very *substance* of prayer, where in it does properly and essentially consist; to make known our requests to God, as our Father in Christ, and so to maintain communion with him. Whosoever he be that does this, he truly prays; And none but he. Therefore *Prayer* by some of the *Ancients* hath after this manner been described unto us; A *Colloquy*, or *Familiar converse* with God, *ἑνωσις τοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, *Chrysostome*. And again, An *Ascension* of the mind to God, *ἡ ἀνάστασις τοῦ νοῦ τοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, *Damascen*. Hereby to signify unto us the *Nature and Essence* of this *Performance*. This then, it teaches men to see what *spirit* they are carried by in their prayers; to look to that, not to rest in the bare outward performance, but to labour for the inward heart and affection. To have the *spirit of prayer*, acting and putting forth it self in them, which is the main business of all. And that not so much in its gifts; as rather in its *Graces* which are most to be desired. He prays best, that has most communion with God in Prayer. And that has he, who has his heart most inflamed and enlarged in it. There are many who content themselves sometimes with meer natural abilities in this exercise, and look no farther than so: but alas what do they signify? Prayer, it is not properly a work of the *Common spirit*, but a work of the *sanctifying spirit*; not of the spirit of *Elocution*, but of the spirit of *Adoption*. A man may possibly deliver himself sometimes in very excellent words and phrases and expressions; and put up such petitions, as may be very good for the matter of them, and also well digested for the form, and yet for all that come short of this business of praying: wherein there are abundance of persons that are mistaken, both as to themselves, and likewise as to others.

There are many people, who when they read or hear of praying by the Spirit, they presently think it is meant of the spirit in the exercise of the common gifts of it, as memory, and invention and utterance and expression. This, it is true, being simply considered is a good and commendable Qualification; and accordingly to be cherished and encouraged in those that enjoy it. But yet they may not satisfy or content themselves with this alone; but endeavour to have somewhat more in them, as pertaining to this Duty, *Covet earnestly the best gifts, but yet shew I unto you a more excellent way*, 1 Cor. 12. 31. Prayer, it requires somewhat else besides this; and that is, to be able to speak to God as a *Gracious Father in Christ*; in an holy fear, and reverence, and humility, and faith, and dependence. And to have the heart and spirit close with him in this performance.

Secondly, This on the other side teaches us, that there may be the Substance and Essence of prayer, and the chiefest thing that belongs unto it, where there is not always that fulness of enlargement. And this is a very comfortable consideration to Gods Children in their worst and saddest conditions. That they are never so ill, but they can pray, because they are never so ill, but they can cry *Abba Father*; And that not only with the mouth, Lord, Lord, but with the heart and spirit it self. The spirit of Adoption which is in them, helps their infirmities, and makes intercession for them with groanings which cannot be uttered, as the Apostle intimates afterwards unto us in the 26 verse of this Chapter.

Again we see here what to think of a set form of prayer, as the *Lords Prayer* or the like; whether a man in the use of this may be said truly to pray?

pray? Now according to the notion of Prayer as it is here exprest in this Text, it is more clear that he may. Because herein he may exercise and improve the *Spirit of Adoption*, and have his heart both disposed in a right manner to God, as also inwardly affected with the sense of his own wants, and of the nature of the things themselves which he seeks to God for. A man may cry *Abba Father*, even when he rehearses *Our Father*. And the spirit of Adoption may be conveyed in a *set Petition*.

That which is objected to the contrary, is that it is not a *praying by the spirit*. To this I answer; That it is true, it is not praying by the spirit so much in the use of the *common gifts of the spirit*; but, it may be a praying by the spirit, as a man may order it, in the use of the *saving gifts* of the spirit, which are most considerable, and those which God does chiefly and mainly look at in this *Performance*. Now a man is always bound to use his *saving gifts*; his faith, and his humility, and his patience, &c. But he is not alwayes bound to use his *common gifts*, his invention and memory, and utterance and such as these; neither do they which *urge* it, do it *themselves*. Farther, a man that has the gift of Languages, and Interpretation of tongues, he might never read the Scripture in a *translation*; but were alwayes bound to read it in the *Original*; because whiles he reads it in the *Original*, there he makes use of his own gifts, but when he reads it in a *Translation*, there he makes use of *another mans gifts*, and takes that which is done to his hand. As a man that has skill in the *Original*, may use a *Translation* upon occasion, so a man too, that has the gift of Prayer, may upon occasion use a form. Now as no man can with any good reason *urge the one*, so neither can he absolutely *urge the other*. He that reads a Chapter in the *Translation*, he may as truly exercise the Graces of a Christian in the reading of it, as he that reads it in the original languages; and may make use of his *Faith*, though he makes not use of his gift of Interpretation.

The scope of all this discourse is not to *disparage* the *common gifts* of Gods spirit, but to advance the *peculiar*: Nor to teach men to rest in *meer formality*, but rightly to *distinguish of things*; and to apprehend them in the true notion and reality of them. Where, this is that which belongs to *prayer*, to be able to cry, *Abba, Father*. That's the *Second* thing, the *Essence* of Prayer.

Now in that it is said here *Abba, Father*; in the Conjunction of these two words together, both *Syriack*, and *Greek*; there is this account may be given of it, Namely, to signifie that God is the Lord and Father both of *Jews and Gentiles*. *Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes of the Gentiles also*, Rom. 3. 29. And Rom. 10. 11, 12. *The Scripture saith, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: For the same God over all, is rich unto all that call upon him.*

Again, *Abba, Father*; to shew the *Double Fatherhood* which God does sustain. He is *Father*, and *Father*: Father of all men by *Creation*, and Father of *Believers* only by *Grace*.

Again, *Abba, Father* ; to denote the *Importunity* which is in Prayer, and to agree with the former word *Crying*. *Ingeminations* carry an *Earnestness* with them.

Lastly, Abba, Father, as signifying that *holy familiarity*, and *Childlike affection* which the servants of God have towards him in this performance: it being (as *Chrysostome* observes of it) *the term* whereby *Children* that were *legitimate* were formerly wont to call *their Parents*.

And so I have done also with the *Second General* part of the Text in the Affirmative Proposition , and with this whole fifteenth verse. *For ye have not received the spirit of Bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

SER.

SERMON XVIII.

ROMANS 8. 16.

*The Spirit it self beareth witness with our Spirit,
that we are the Children of God.*

We have here in this Scripture before us the best assurance of the best Title in the world. The Title which is here mentioned, is that of the Children of God: And the assurance which is here given of this Title, is the Testimony of the Spirit of God, which is a witness, with a witness indeed. It is that, which (if we well consider it) is no other than both equal and necessary, that together with our own Spirits, we should have his Spirit joyn with us, for the assurance of such a blessed state and condition as this is unto us. Just, and Equal it is, because sometimes in our own Cause, we are apt to be selfish and partial. And needful, and necessary it is, because again, as the Case may be with us, we are apt to be jealous and doubtful: Each of which are most happily prevented, and kept off by this Dispensation. That we might not be selfish or partial, we have therefore here the Testimony of another, as well as our own: And that we might not be jealous or doubtful, we have here the Testimony even of God himself. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: For this is the witness, which God hath testified concerning his Sons: That they are indeed his Children. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is Truth. The Spirit it self beareth witness with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God.

IN the Text it self, there are two General Parts considerable: *First*, the witnesses mentioned. *Secondly*, the thing it self, which they bear witness unto. The witnesses mentioned, they are two. *First*, our own Spirit. *Secondly*, the Spirit of God, together with ours. The thing it self, or matter of their witness, that is, *That we are the Children of God.*

We begin with the former of these parts, viz. *The witnesses themselves* here mentioned, which are here exprest to be of two sorts, and so distinctly to be handled by us. Our own Spirit, and the Spirit of God with it. Each of these do bear witness to the Truth of Adoption, in those who are true Believers.

First, Our own Spirit, that is, the Spirit of the Children of God considered by it self. This is one witness to them of their state and condition in Grace, and of their relation to God, as their Father. Our own Spirit (for the

the right explication of it) is not to be taken in a *corrupt sense*: for our *car-nal spirit*: our spirit so far forth as *polluted and defiled* with sin. This is some-times too much our *own*, and so *denominated*: but such as is no *competent Judge, or witness* of such a *business* as this we now speak of. Nor,

Secondly, Is it to be taken in a *common sense*; for our *meer natural spirit*; our *soul* in its *physical* consideration: for there is a witness (as we acknow-ledge) even in that of *civil and natural* actions. But it is to be taken in a *more refined and spiritual* sense; Our *Spirit*, so far forth as *sanctified, and renewed by Grace, sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ*; and *having his Image instampt upon it, making up the Regenerate part in us*: This is our *Spirit*, in the sense of this *Scripture*. Look as this is the difference betwixt a *Man* and other *Creatures*, that he is able to *reflect* upon his actions, which another *cannot*: so this is the difference betwixt a *Christian*, and other *men*, that he can *reflect* upon his *own Grace*; which *others* are not able to do: not only from a *deficiency in the Object* or thing to be *discern'd*; but also from an *insufficiency in the faculty*, as to the *discerning* of it. The *Spirit* of a *Rege-nerate* person is a witness to him of his *Adoption*. This is *suitable* and *agreeable* to other places of *Scripture* besides, as *2 Cor. 1. 12. Our rejoicing is this: Even the Testimony of our Conscience. 1 Joh. 3. 21. If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God. And 1 Joh. 5. 10. He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself; In himself, that is, in his own heart and Spirit, which does exhibit this witness to him. And Rom. 9. 1. My Conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, &c.*

For the better opening of this *Point* unto us, we must know that a *mans own spirit* does witness to him his *Adoption, or state in Grace*; according to a *threefold Reflexion*: *First*, upon his *Primitive Conversion*, and the manner and carriage of *that*. *Secondly*, upon his *habitual disposition*, and the *frame* and *temper* of *that*. *Thirdly*, upon his *General Conversation*, and the *ordering* and *regulating* of *that*. By *reflecting* upon each of these, in the *right and due observation* of them, does a *mans own private spirit and Conscience* witness to him, That *he is a Child of God*.

First, (I say) by *reflecting* upon the work of his *Primitive Conversion*, and *embracing* of *Christ* at first. Whosoever hath truly *received Christ*, and laid hold on him as he is offered in the *Gospel*, for both a *Lord and Savi-our*; such an one may undoubtedly conclude himself to be in the *state of Adoption*: For as many as *received him, to them he gave power, or privi-ledge to be the Sons of God*, *Joh. 1. 12*. Now the true *Believer*, he is enabled to take notice of this: By considering what has *past through him*, and what actions have been done in his *soul*: And so consequently is enabled to make a conclusion answerable to those premises. The *Spirit* of a *man, knowing the things of a man*, as the *Apostle Paul* intimates to us, *1 Cor. 2. 11.*

How does such a *woman* know that she is such a *Mans wife*? Why she knows it from hence, because upon his *offer and tender of himself unto her*, she has *accepted him, and taken him for her Husband*; and there is a *mutual contract* which is drawn between them: In the like manner does a true *Be-liever* know himself to be the *Child of God*, and *Spouse of Christ*: Because by considering, and *reflecting* upon what has been done by him, he finds, that being thoroughly convinced of his *wretchedness and sinfulness by nature*, he has been willing to close with the *Grace and Mercy which is offered in the Gospel*,

Gospel; and to accept of Christ for his *Lord and Saviour*; and this done the match is made up, and confirmed *between them*, and so remains as *uncapable* of future *Breach and Dissolution*: It being an *everlasting Covenant* which is made: *Even the sure mercies of David*, *Esa.* 55. 3. And a *betrothing* to him *for ever*, *Hof.* 2. 19. And those whom he loved at first, *He loved to the end*, as it is in *Joh.* 13. 1.

This *Reflexion*, which we now speak of, is a very profitable course to be taken by *Christians*, in time of *Temptation*, when other evidences which we shall speak of afterwards, may not be alwaies so *clear*; then to run and to have recourse to *this*. This is suitable and agreeable to that which is called the Testimony or *witness of the blood*, *1 Joh.* 5. 8. *when the blood of Christ is sprinkled upon our Consciences*, that is, when by Faith it is applyed and brought home to our hearts; when we *prize* it, and *esteem* it, and *accept* of it, as shed for us, and are willing to be saved by it, upon *those terms* on which it is propounded: then may we conclude our selves to be *accepted*, and *justified* persons: And this *blood of sprinkling*, it will *speak better things* than that of *Abel*, *Heb.* 12. 24. Therefore when Conscience is *clamorous*, it is a good course, I say, to reflect upon *this*: And to reason thus with a *mans* self, and in *his own spirit*. There is a sufficiency in the *blood of Christ* to cleanse from all sin: Now I am willing to lay hold on this *Blood*; yea, I have laid hold on it *already*: being offered and propounded to me, and so expect benefit from it. Whosoever can lay *this unfeignedly* (as it is possible for Christians to do) they may conclude themselves to be in a good Estate. They are adopted, because they are *justified*: And justified, because *effectually* called. And that's the *first Reflexion*, in order to this Testimony of a *mans own private spirit* and Conscience: Namely, upon his *Primitive Conversion*, and *embracing of Christ at first*.

The *Second way*, whereby *our spirits* do bear witness to us, *that we are the Children of God*, is by *Reflexion* upon a *further work* in us, which is *inseparably* joyned with the other: And that is, the changing of *our natures*, and the working of *gracious qualities*, and dispositions put into our hearts. Whosoever have truly, and in good earnest taken the *Lord Jesus Christ*, upon those terms on which he is offered in the *Gospel*: there is together with this their closing with him, wrought a *work of sanctification* upon them: which makes up that which we call the *New Creature*. The Spirit of *Adoption* is inseparably the spirit of *Regeneration*. Take notice of *that*. Those whom God does take to be his Children, he does plant such dispositions in them as are suitable and agreeable to *him*, whose *Children they are*, so that they may know the *one by the other*. Thus *Gal.* 4. 6. *Because ye are Sons: God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts*. Those who are the *Sons of God*, they are led by the Spirit of God, as it is in *verse 14.* of this Chapter. And so again also reciprocally: Those who are led by the Spirit of God, they are unquestionably the *Sons of God*.

And here now the Case is somewhat different betwixt *temporal Adoption*, and *spiritual*. As for *men*, they may adopt Sons unto them: but they can bestow no qualities upon them, whereby they may become like to themselves. They may convey to them their *Lands*; but they cannot convey to them their *Minds*. And they may give them their Estates; but they cannot give them their *Dispositions*, even there where they are *worth* the giving, as sometimes they are not. Yea, but God now, he is able to do *this*: and does it

to all those who are his *Adopted*. From whence they do conclude themselves to be *adopted by him*: And it is called the Testimony of the *Water*; as the other is called the Testimony of the *Blood*, in the place before cited.

This is true of the whole work of *Sanctification* considered at large. But it is more especially apparent in some *particular Graces*, amongst the rest, which do more fully evidence it to us.

As namely, *First*, The Grace of *Faith*. The Scripture, it much runs upon *that*, speaking to this purpose, as 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. *He that believeth, hath the witness in himself*, which we are to take *reduplicative*: *Because* he believeth. And *Eph.* 1. 12. *Believing ye were sealed, &c.* And *Acts* 15. 8, 9. It is spoken concerning the *Gentiles*, that *God bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost*; and *purifying their hearts by Faith*: That is *one Grace*, *viz.* of *Faith*.

Again, As *Faith*, so also *Love*, 1 *Joh.* 4. 16. *God is Love*; *who so dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him*. Hereby we know that we are the *Children of God*, when we love those that are his Children, and *eo nomine*, for that very respect *because* they are his Children.

So again, an *Holy Fear*, and Awfulness of the Majesty of God; and tenderness of doing any thing which may be offensive and displeasing to him; as an ingenuous Child towards a loving Father.

And so a *Zeal* for the glory of God: And a Spirit *rising up*, where he is at any time *dishonoured*. And that is also the *second Reflexion*, whereby our spirit bears witness of our Adoption: Namely, as upon the work of *Grace*, and *Sanctification*, which is wrought in the Heart. This, where ever it is discerned in *reality*, is an assurance to us that we are the *Children of God*.

The *Third* and last, Is by a *Reflexion* upon our whole *Life and Conversation*; as to the ordering and regulating of *that*. To this full *Testimony of Conscience*, and the *spirit of a man* within himself, it is not enough or sufficient to consider that we have received and embraced Christ in our first *Conversion*; No, nor yet that answerably hereunto we have had *gracious Principles* put into us: But likewise that our *lives and waies* have been answerable unto these *principles*. That so *sincerity* may be joyned with *fruitfulness*; and both together may reflect the more sweetly and comfortably to us; which in their *disjunction* will not do so well. And this is that which all the *Saints and Servants of God* have at all times been careful of for themselves: Not only, considering what they have *been*, in regard of their *principles*; but what they have *done*, in regard of their *actions*: and how they walked in regard of their *lives*: which has (with respect still had to the *grace of Christ*; not any *merit* or desert of their own) been matter still of great *comfort and satisfaction* to them in this particular. Thus *Hezekiah*, that he had walked before God in truth, and with a perfect heart, *Esa.* 38. 3. And *David*, that he walked in his integrity, in *Psal.* 26. 1. And *Paul*, his rejoicing was this, *The Testimony of his Conscience*. But to what purpose? That *not with fleshy wisdom, but by the grace of God, he had had his conversation in the world, &c.* 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. Thus we see in all these particulars, how our spirit does bear witness of our Adoption, from a three-fold reflexion: upon our *first and Primitive Conversion*; upon our consequent and following *sanctification*; and upon our answerable, and *suitable Conversation*.

This Point which we have here before us, meets with the opinion of such persons

persons as deny the knowledge of our salvation, from the fruits of holiness, and Sanctification in us. This is refuted from this place of Scripture, where it is said, *The spirit beareth witness with our spirit*: Therefore our Spirit is a witness for its own particular, which it can be said no other waies to be, than by a reflexion upon the work of Grace in us: and the fruits of it in new obedience; and a Godly and holy conversation. This is that from whence we rationally conclude of our interest in God as his Children, whiles we find these things in our selves. These things they are not the Causes of our Adoption: but they are the evidences and discoveries of it to us. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the first witness, here mentioned in the Text, as certifying our Adoption to us, and that is, as it is here exprest, *Our own Spirit*.

The Second, Is the *Spirit of God*, and more expressly the *Spirit of Adoption*, which we find to be mentioned in the close of the preceding verse of this Chapter. The *Spirit is self*, or the *self same Spirit*, *aut rã unum*. This, it bears witness of our Adoption, and state in Grace. And it may be conceived to do so two manner of waies: First, as it witnesses to our spirits, in its distinct and immediate Testimony. Secondly, at it witnesses with our spirits, in its conjunctive and concurrent Testimony: Either of these are here signified to us in this passage, which we have now before us.

We begin in order with the first of these Testimonies: which is that which is distinct and immediate; wherein the *Spirit of God* does without the intercurrent or mediation of any discourse on our part, or argument on his, signifie his Love, and good will to such persons as are partakers of it. This is the Testimony, which we are now to speak of. And there are two things considerable of us in reference to it: The nature of it. And the discovery. The nature of it: what, or what manner of thing it is. The discovery of it: from whence it may be discerned.

First, To speak of the nature of it: what, or what manner of thing it is. This is necessary to be explained by us; that we do not mistake it. Now for this, it is nothing else but a gracious hint or Intimation given to the soul by God, assuring our hearts and Consciences of his favour and love towards us: and of our Attonement, and Reconciliation with him through the blood of his Son: *Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee; I am thy salvation: Thou art mine*, and the like. Such a secret and still voice, and whispering there is sometimes to the soul, which a true believer is sensible of, working peace, and joy in him. This, it is not Argumentative, but Declarative: Not by force of Reason, but by the immediateness of presence: As the very sight of a Friend comforts a man, though he should not speak a word unto him. It is not a violent ecstasie or rapture of soul beyond it self, as Illuminatis and Enthusiasts, and such kind of people as those are, are sometimes deluded withall, but a sober, and judicious, and composed frame of Spirit: which lies not at all in the phancy; as the subject of it, but in the heart. It is set forth to us in Scripture by divers and sundry phrases; of Christs coming in unto us, and making of his abode with us, *Joh. 14. 23*. Of his manifesting himself to us, *Joh. 14. 21*. Of his supping with us.

To speak distinctly of it we may look upon it under a threefold property, or qualification: First, as secret and inexpressible. Secondly, as certain and infallible. Thirdly, as inconstant and various.

First, This manner of Testimony of the Spirit, whereof we now speak, it is secret, and inexpressible: An hidden mystery, and such as is easier felt and apprehended by those that have it, than it can be described, or exprest to any that have it not; as a man that tastes Honey sweet, cannot make another to conceive the sweetness of it: Therefore it is called the *hidden Manna*; and the *white stone*; and the writing of the *new name*, which no man knoweth, save he that receiveth it, Rev. 2. 17. It is called *unspeakable Joy*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. And being a beginning as it were even of Heaven it self, in the first fruits of the Spirit, it is so far forth of the nature of those things, *2 in 2 Cor. 12. 4*, which it is not possible for a man to utter, 2 Cor. 12. 4. That's one one property, or quality in it.

Secondly, It is certain and infallible. Such a witness, as where it is indeed, there is no question at all to be made of that thing which it is a Witness unto. When the Holy Ghost himself once witnesses our Adoption, and future Salvation; what further doubt can be made of it, as Chrysostome upon the place expostulates, *quid aliter disputabilia*. This, it is like the witness of a Prince, *Teste in ipso*, which puts all presently out of Controversie. Of this nature is this immediate testimony; which where ever it comes in the reality and fulness of it, and so long as it remains upon the Soul, it silences all objections, scatters all temptations, removes all scruples; and doubts whatsoever to the contrary: And sets the heart at perfect rest.

This, as it does discover to the Soul its general interest in the favour of God, and relation to him in Christ: so in particular, it does assure a man of the answer and hearing of his Prayers. For such a thing also there is: and it is a Branch, and an appurtenance of this immediate witness of the Spirit whereunto it belongs; whereby a true Believer having poured forth his soul to God, in that performance, hath this infallibly set home upon his Spirit, that his Prayer is heard: Therefore it is here said in the Text, the *self-same Spirit*, as some expound it, and that not impertinently, that is, *The Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father*. The same Spirit of God which does enable the Children of God, with an holy and Child-like boldness, to call upon him, and stirs up gracious desires in them, does also oftentimes assure them that they are heard in that which they ask; by a special enlargement of the heart whether in or after the performance.

This, it does not alwaies imply a granting of the very particular thing which is asked or desired (wherein it is possible for men to be mistaken) though there may be that also sometimes in it: But the meaning of all such enlargements as those are comes to this; and may be reduced to two Heads: *First*, that God does graciously accept of the petition, making this Prayer unto him, *O Daniel thou art greatly beloved*. *Secondly*, that God will do that which shall be most for his own glory, and the ultimate and final contentment and satisfaction of the person himself, and will grant the thing, or that which is equivalent and better. But,

Thirdly, This witness of the Spirit, it is moreover inconstant and various, *Rara hora brevis mora*, Bernard. And is not alwaies, or at all times alike vouchsafed to those that receive it, and are partakers of it. The state of Gods Children it self, that is unchangeable, and unmoveable, as God himself is, to whom they belong: But the discovery and evidence of it unto them, this does admit of its differences and variations. As God does alwaies hear their Prayers, and intends to grant them; but yet does not alwaies

waies intimate so much unto them. *The wind bloweth where it listeth*: and so also does the *Spirit of God*, as in his *Graces*, so likewise in his *Comforts*: And he delights much to shew his *freedom* and *absoluteness* in this particular, that we may be the more beholding to him: and in a continual dependence upon him for it.

Therefore it will be the wisdom of Christians to make much of such *gracious opportunities*, and *breathings* as these are, at such time as they *enjoy* them, and to lay them up against a time of need, when as they may reflect comfortably upon them: For a Believer though he hath not alwaies this *Testimony* exhibited unto him: yet he may alwaies live in the comfort of it, after he hath once received it: because the *truth* of it still remains, where the *tender* of it may *cease* unto him. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the First thing considerable in this *Testimony*: and that is the nature and properties of it; what, or what manner of thing it is; Which we have seen in three particulars: *First*, It is *secret* and *unexpressible*. *Secondly*, It is *certain* and *infallible*. *Thirdly*, It is *inconstant* and *various*.

Now the *Second* thing here considerable of us, is the *discovery* of it, whereby it may be *known*. This *inquiry* is very *necessary* for us, in regard of the manifold mistakes and deceits, which are in this particular. For there are many *Hypocrites*, and carnal persons, who are now and then full of *great raptures*, and have great Joy, and *Elevation of Spirit*: who are yet but kept in a *fools Paradise* all the while: and are most fearfully *deluded by Satan*, who is a *Spirit of Error*. We should therefore, as *St. John* advises us, *try the spirits whether they be of God or no*. And as in other things, so especially in this business which we have now in hand. Where, we may make a discovery of it in a *threefold* way of manifestation: *First*, from the *Antecedents*. *Secondly*, from the *Concomitants*. And *Thirdly*, from the *Consequents* of this *Testimony*. By each of these we may see, whether it be of God or no.

First, From the *Antecedents*. The witness of the Spirit of God, assuring our Salvation unto us, is not his *first* work upon us; but there is alwaies another work, which goes before in us. In *Eph. 1. 13*. It is said, *After that ye believed, ye were sealed*: Sealing comes after believing, that so it may not be a Seal to a *blank*. The Spirit's witness of our salvation is consequent to his work of our *Conversion*: where that has *not gone before*, this (to be sure) is never performed.

And there are two reasons for it: *First*, because this Witness of the Spirit, it is an *act* of special favour, and good-will, and loving kindness towards us. It is the *greatest* and *highest* privilege that any Creature here in this world is capable of, to have the *Spirit of God himself* immediately making known to him his *future condition*. Therefore it is such as belongs only to those who are *friends*: and in a state of *actual reconciliation* unto him. Those who are not yet *Converted* and *Sanctified*, they are *incapable* of such a favour as that is.

Secondly, Because the *Judgement*, and so also the witness of God, as *St. Paul* speaks, is according to *truth*: whiles therefore he testifies such an one to be in a *state of salvation*, he must be first of all in a *state of Conversion*; or otherwise we should make God a *liar*, which it is *impossible* for him to be. The Spirit it never seals, but it first writes. Never is a Spirit of *Consolation*, where it is not first a Spirit of *Renovation*.

Where besides this *General Antecedent* of the Work of Grace, at large, as the Foundation, we may take notice of some *special* Graces in particular, which God has commonly an Eye unto in the vouchsafing of this favour. As some special Act of *self-denial* in parting with any thing for Gods glory. Some special conflict with temptations and victory over a mans lusts. *To him that overcometh*, &c. Some special activity, and faithfulness in Gods service. These and the like are the *Introductions* to such a favour, and priviledge as this is. And thus may it be discovered from the *Antecedents*.

Secondly, We may take notice of it in its *Concomitants*, and those things which do usually attend it. As *first* a reverend esteem of the *Ordinances* and Ministerial Dispensations, and more especially of the *Scriptures*, and written word of God, which the Spirit of God in the Conscience has alwayes a respect unto, and agreement withall. *To the Law, is the Testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*, as it is, *Esa.* 8. 20. Those that despise the word, they were never acquainted with the witness of the Spirit.

And then it is also accompanied with *humility and meekness of Spirit*, and an holy care and fear of offending. Those who have greatest comfort from God, they are commonly most *abased in themselves*; and likewise most *tender towards others*. There's an holy Modesty, and Ingenuity in Grace, and *Spiritual Assurance*; whilest presumption, and carnal Confidence, is full of *Arrogancy, and haughtiness of mind*, which is joyned together with it.

And again, There's an holy boldness and confidence at the Throne of grace, which does accompany this Testimony of the Spirit: *Seeing we have such hope, we use great freedom of speech*, 2 Cor. 3. 12. As in other things so amongst the rest in *Prayer*. And this for the *Concomitants*.

Thirdly, For its *Consequents and Effects*. They are also sundry and various; if we had time to insist upon them. *Joy in the Holy Ghost*, which is unspeakable and glorious. Contempt of the world, and of the vanities and pleasures of it. Comfortable thoughts *even of Death it self*, and desires *to be with Christ*. From these and the like *Discoveries* may we discern the Testimony of the Spirit to be such as it is.

But moreover to make all *clear*: we must further know thus much, That the Spirit of God *bears witness to it self*, in its witnessing to us: As it is *infallible* in regard of the *matter* of its *Testimony*; so it is *convincing* in regard of the *evidence*, and manner of its proceeding. And it shews it self to be *far different* from all *Delusions and Mistakes whatsoever*. Though many who have the *spirit of Error*, conceit themselves to have the spirit of *Truth*, yet those who have Gods Spirit in truth, may assuredly know that it is so his, as that it is no other besides. As though he who is asleep, thinks himself sometimes to be awake, yet he who is awake, knows that he is not asleep. Look as the Prophets of old, they did not only know those things to be true, which they *prophefied of*, but also knew the *Spirit* to be Gods which they *prophefied by*: So likewise Gods Children here in this particular, they do not only *know themselves* to be his Children, but also know *that spirit* which tells them that *they are* his Children. And it is a sufficient witness to it self, though there were no other besides. As the *Sun* which discovers *other things* is also seen by the same light it self whereby it *discovers* them. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the *first kind* of Testimony of the Spirit in reference to our *Adoption*, namely, as witnessing *it to us*, more *directly and immediately* and

and distinctly, and alone by it self; Not by *discourse*, but by way of *presence*.

The *Second* is the *Conjunctive* or *Concurrent* Testimony. As the Spirit witnesseth to us, so it witnesseth *with* us. And *with* us, not only by way of *Concomitancy*, but by way of *Assistance*. His *Testimony*, it has an Influence upon ours; that is, he helps us to witness to our selves: which is further to be added by us for the explication of our own private Testimony which I spake of in the beginning of the Sermon. This is not perform'd effectually without the *conjunction* of Gods Spirit with it; both as *graciously shining* upon his own promises laid down in the Scriptures, as also *enabling our hearts and consciences* to the apprehending of them and of our own interest in them. We are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing to this purpose of our selves, but our sufficiency is of God, 2 Cor. 3. 5.

This is different from the former Testimony of the Spirit of God in two regards: First, That in that he has no concurrence with us, neither are we, by way of activity, but meerly passively any parties at all in it; but in this we are. Secondly, That in that he proceeds by way of simple Assertion; but in this by way of Argument and Reason: clearing both the premises of the practical Syllogism to us, and enabling us to infer the Conclusion. First, He makes us to see, That whosoever believes shall be saved. Secondly, He makes us to see, That we for our parts do believe. And then he makes us to infer, and to conclude our salvation from both. Now this is needful thus to be done by him in regard of the weakness and narrowness of our understandings; and the uncertainty of our own private spirits left alone to themselves: which though regenerate and in part sanctified, yet are not able so fully to reach to such a business as this is: Either to the discerning of Gods Truths, or our own Acts, without a new and fresh supply of assistance from the Spirit of God, especially in the time of any sore and pressing temptation. Here we need his concurrence with us, to help us out of those difficulties which are upon us. And this is that, which through his Grace and Goodness, we do receive from him, as is here signified while it is said, that he bears witness with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God.

The sum of all which hath been spoken in this Point, in either Branches of it, may be thus far improved by us in a way of Application, That as many as do partake of this privilege, they would be careful to walk answerable to it. For, as there is first of all no such happiness in the world, as to be the Adopted sons and daughters of God; so next of all, there's no such happiness as this, to know our selves to be so, and to have this cleared, and made good to our Consciences, that it is so with us. And this is that which is here vouchsafed and dispensed unto us, which calls for all suitable carriage, and regard, and behaviour from us: we should therefore treat this spirit well, and take heed that we forfeit not such a privilege as this is from us, but preserve it and maintain it all that may be. And so now I have done with the first General part of the Text which is the witnesses themselves here mentioned: First, our own Spirit, and then the Spirit of God to it, and with it.

The *Second* is the *Matter* of this witness; or the thing it self witnessed unto: And that we have in those words, That we are the Children of God. This

This we have spoken to *implicitly* in that which we have delivered already about the *witnesses themselves*: but here now we may take a more *particular and distinct* account of it which comes to *this*; That there is *such a thing* as an Assurance of our state in Grace, and so of future salvation, *here in this life*. Gods Children, they may even here in this world be assured, that they are his Children, and so consequently that they shall hereafter be made partakers of *Eternal Salvation*. This is plainly declared in the *Text*, which speaks of it, as of a thing confirmed by an *infallible Testimony*, such as that of Gods Spirit is: and so in that regard out of all *question and controversy*. And it is *suitable* to other places besides. Thus Rom. 5. 5. *Hope maketh us not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.* Gods Spirit does pour into the hearts of Gods Children a *sense and feeling* of his *Eternal Love*. So 1 Cor. 2. 9, 10. speaking of the state of Believers in another world: *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him: he adds, But God hath revealed these things to us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God.* And again in the 12 verse of the same Chapter. *Now we have received not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God.* And those things are especially our *present Grace* and *future salvation*. This is such as there are Instances of in sundry Persons. Thus the Disciples of Christ, he tells them, Joh. 14. 20. *At that day ye shall know, that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.* In that day, namely, when the Holy Ghost should be bestowed upon them. So the Apostle Paul, Rom. 8. 38, 39. *I am persuaded that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.* And in the first Epistle of John, the whole Book throughout, there are many expressions to this purpose, of Gods Children's *knowing* of themselves to be in favour with him. Yea many of the Saints of God in Scripture are in particular mentioned as those who did partake of it, as *Abraham, David and Paul, &c.*

This it may be further cleared upon these Arguments which make for it, as *First*, From the Description of *Faith* it self in the highest Notion, and Degree of it, which the Scripture does set forth to us, under terms of *Certainty and Assurance*; Calling it *πληροφορία*, which signifies a *full Gale*. In Heb. 10. 22. *πληροφορία πίστεως*, The full Assurance of Faith. In Heb. 6. 11. *πληροφορία ἰσχυρίσθαι*, The full Assurance of Hope. In Rom. 4. 21. speaking of *Abraham*, it is said, that he was *fully persuaded*, so it is called *ὑποχρησθαι, ἡ ὑπόστασις*, The substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. This is the Description, which is made of *Faith*.

Secondly, From the Exhortations which are given to Christians to this purpose. For *tryal, and self-examination*: *Examine your selves, prove your selves, Know ye not your own selves, &c.* 2 Cor. 13. 5. for, Endeavour to attain this Assurance. 2 Pet. 1. 10. *wherefore brethren, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.* And Heb. 6. 11. *We desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the End.* Now to what purpose are such exhortations, if the thing it self could not be?

Thirdly, From this Double or Treble Testimony in the Text. The old rule holds good, *That in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word shall be*

be established. And thus it is here in this present business: as our Saviour sometime applyed it to his own particular, Joh. 8. 18. *I am one that bears witness of my self, and the Father that sent me, bears witness of me.* So may we say here concerning this Witness of a Christians Adoption. *Our spirit bears witness of it self: And the Spirit of God beareth witness with our spirit.* And from both together we have a clear Evidence of the thing it self, which is witnessed unto.

Lastly, This may be confirmed unto us from the manifest *Absurdity, and Inconvenience* which does follow from the *contrary doctrine*, which making men *uncertain* of their estate and condition, whether *present or future*, does by this means cast them into continual fears and perplexities of mind, from whence they walk both *uncomfortably*, and also *unserviceably*; not being able to yield unto God that cheerful and hearty service which otherwise they might be able to do. There's no such free and hearty service, as the service of him that is a son, and that *thinks himself*, and *considers himself* to be so. Phil. 2. 21. *As a Son with the Father, he hath served with me in the Gospel.* And Mal. 3. 17. *As a man spares his own Son that serveth him.* The knowledge or Ignorance of this, doth either quicken, or slacken obedience, which therefore is not to be denied to those who are the *Sons of God*.

The Consideration of this Point may be thus far useful to us. First, As a Confutation of the *Papists* and some others with them, who deny this Assurance we now speak of, and teach that without a *special and extraordinary revelation*, none can be sure of their state in grace or future Glory. We see here the *contrary* by what is the scope of this *present Text*, which does hold forth to us an assurance of our Adoption, by a *common and ordinary testimony* of the Spirit of God exhibited to our spirits, and concurring with them. And it is an *high piece of Arrogance*, and presumption, to refuse or to despise such a gracious help as this is, which is afforded unto us. And it is a *Trepass* upon the spirit of God, in that which is his proper office; which is to be as he is called, the Comforter: And he by whom we are sealed unto the day of Redemption.

If ye shall ask, why this work of witnessing is rather attributed and appropriated to the Spirit, than to any other of the Persons in Trinity: the reason of it is clear: First, Because the Spirit is he, which proceeds both from Father and Son, and so is fittest to signify the Love of both with his own unto us. As the spirit of a man is best acquainted with the things of a man; so is the Spirit of God best acquainted with the things of God, 1 Cor. 2. 11.

Secondly, One Appropriation is founded upon another. It is the Spirit which is properly said to work Grace in us at first, and therefore the fittest to bear witness of that grace which is wrought: as one that is best able to justify and to make good his own work.

Thirdly, It is the Spirit of God, which has most immediate communion with us, and who is most exercised and conversant about us. All the transactions and passages which are carryed from God to us, and from us back again to God, they are by the Mediation of Christ through the Spirit, Ephes. 2. 18. *Through him we have an access by one spirit unto the Father; both Jews and Gentiles, &c.*

A Second use of this point may be this: That seeing there is such a thing as this is, to wit, the Assurance of our Adoption here in this life; and that especially conveyed unto us by the Spirit of God; therefore that we do for

our parts endeavour to attain unto it, and to be made partakers of it. Seeing it is possible in the thing it self, it should be followed and pursued by us, as that which is worth our care and greatest prosecution. We see hence how in things of the world men are careful to make good their relations, that they may enjoy the comfortable Effects and Consequences of it. And how much more does it then concern us to make good our Interest in Christ, and our Relation to God through him, which will stand us most in stead, when all other things will fail us, and give us the slip?

Beloved, The world will alwayes be the world, as long as it lasts, that is, subject to many troubles, and uncertainties, and variety of conditions. But this is the Comfort of the Children of God, that they have that within them, which overcomes it, and gets victory over it. And whatever becomes of other men, it shall be well with those that fear the Lord: For as Solomon tells us to this purpose, Prov. 14. 26. *In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, and his Children have a place of refuge.* So much for that, and also of this whole Text, *The Spirit it self beareth witness, &c.*

SER

S E R M O N X I X.

ROMANS 8. 17.

And if Children then Heirs ; Heirs of God, and Joynt-heirs with Christ.

It is the Nature and Property of Faith, where it fastens, not to let go its hold, but to proceed from one thing to another ; and to improve every thing what it can to its own advantage. where it has laid a good Foundation, there to raise an answerable Building, and superstructure upon it. And where it has light upon comfortable premises, to infer an answerable conclusion, and deduction from them. And this is that which we may here observe in the tenour of this present Scripture, in the Discourse of the Apostle Paul, with these Believing Romans, to whom he writes: who having first made good their Adoption from the confirmation of a double Testimony, of their own Spirit, and the Spirit of God with it, does from hence conclude upon their Inheritance: as suitable to such a Blessed Estate as that was, whereof they were partakers. And if Children then Heirs ; Heirs of God, and Joynt-heirs with Christ.

IN the Text it self there are two General Parts considerable : *First*, the Priviledge it self, which does belong to the Children of God, by virtue of their *Adoption*: And that is an *Inheritance*, *If Children then Heirs*. *Secondly*, the *Explication*, or *Amplification* of this Priviledge to them ; and that is consisting of two Branches: The *first* is taken from the *Person*, whom they are Heirs of ; *Heirs of God*. And the *second* is taken from the *Person*, whom they are Heirs with : *Joynt-heirs with Christ*.

We begin in order with the *first* of these Parts, *viz. The Priviledge it self*, which belongs to Gods Children, by virtue of their *Adoption*, as it is propounded in *General*, in these words, *And if Children then Heirs* ; where we need not go far for an Observation. The Point being in effect all one with the *Text it self* : And that is *this*, *That all Gods Children are Heirs*. Who-soever do partake of the *Redemption*, they do partake of the *Inheritance*. This is suitable and agreeable to some other places of Scripture besides ; as *Gal. 3. 28, 29. Ye are all one in Christ Jesus : And if ye be Christs, then are ye Abrahams seed, and Heirs according to promise. So Gal. 4. 7. Wherefore thou art no more a Servant, but a Son ; and if a Son, then an Heir of*

God through Christ. Mark, if a Son, then an Heir of God. The very Inference which is here made in the Text. So again, Tit. 3. 7. *That being justified by his Grace, we should be made Heirs according to the hope of Eternal Life.*

Now there is a *various account*, which may be given hereof unto us; which we may take in these following particulars: First, their *Fathers Affection* and special *Love*, which he bears unto them. *Affection* has a very great influence oftentimes upon an *Inheritance*, for the ordering and disposing of it. Now this in God is towards all his Children without exception: And therefore they are all of them Heirs unto him. He loves them, and therefore he *in-states* them, and bestows great things upon them; and intends to do more for time to come.

There's Affection, and (which we are to take in together with it) there is the Constancy and Immutability of it. There are many sometimes in the world, who have thoughts for such and such to be their Heirs; but then their minds do very easily change and alter in them; any phancy, or conceit puts them by; and causes them to dispose it to some body else. Yea, but now with God it is otherwise: Those who are his Children as he loves them, so he loves them to the End: with an everlasting, and an unchangeable Love.

Secondly, As there is their *Fathers Affection*, so there is likewise their *Fathers Promise*. A Promise does engage a man to performance; even there where he has no mind to the thing it self: Especially, there where it shall be seconded, and confirmed by an Oath. As we know how Bathsheba urged it to David, in the case of Solomon, against Adonijah, 1 King. 1. 17. *My Lord, thou swarest by the Lord thy God unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy Son shall reign after me: and he shall sit upon my Throne.* Suppose that David had not born that love to Solomon, as to Adonijah, for the making of him his Heir; yet having promised it and sworn it, he was now hereupon engaged unto it. Why this now is another Consideration, which makes the Children of God to be his Heirs: Because he has most strongly engaged himself hereunto, both by promising, and swearing; as we may see in Heb. 6. 17. where the Children of God are expressly called the Heirs of Promise, αἱ κληρονομία καὶ ἐπαγγελία. And again, Gal. 3. ult. Heirs according to Promise, καὶ ἐπαγγελίας κληρονομία. And this Promise again back'd by an Oath, in the place before cited; wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the Heirs of Promise the immutability of his Counsel, confirmed it by an Oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope that is set before us. In Psal. 89. 35. It is said, *Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David; his seed shall endure for ever, &c.* God stands much upon his word and his Oath, for the performance of them. And that's a second Account of this business. All Gods Children are Heirs; not only as interested in the same gracious Affection: but likewise as well in the same gracious Promise.

Thirdly, Their very Relation, and condition wherein they are, it gives them right and title hereto. Children, they are Heirs by the Law of Nature, considered as Children; and so it is likewise with the Children of God: Especially, being his Children by Adoption, which is with a special reference and respect hereto. The reason why men adopt Sons, is of purpose to make them their Heirs; and those who are so, they may well expect the Inheritance

tance to be given them, even upon that *very consideration*: And that's a *Third*.

Fourthly, The *Largeness* and *Vastness* of the *Estate*; that's another advancement hereunto. All Gods Children are Heirs, because there is *Means enough* for them all. Amongst *men*, many times it is not so: The *Eldest* commonly carries away all: or at least the *greatest part* of it, for the maintaining and keeping up of the *Family*; whereas the *younger* Brothers are *far inferior* to them. Yea, but now with the *Lord* it is *otherwise*: He has enough for the plentiful supply of *all* his Children, and can give them a large and rich *Inheritance*. As some *great rich men* indeed, they are able sometimes to make *two or three Families*, out of the largeness and vastness of their Possessions; and can furnish them and enrich them all: so also can God. In my Fathers House (saies Christ) are many Mansions, Joh. 14. 2. There is no quarrelling in Heaven for room: as it was sometimes betwixt Isaac and Abimelech; and betwixt the Servants of Abraham and of Lot. No, there is enough for all. All Gods Children are Heirs: because all of them have sufficient provision. And the Estate it self will well enough bear it, without any spoiling, or diminishing of it.

The Consideration of this Point, is matter of great encouragement to Gods Children, whosoever they are: In all ranks, and estates, and Conditions; whether *high or low*, *elder or younger*, *male or female*, they are all one in Christ: And if they be Children, they are Heirs. What ever respects of difference, or partiality may carry it in the world, they do none of them take place in this business. God is no respecter of persons in this particular: but whosoever fear him are accepted of him: And whomsoever he adopts to be his Sons, upon them does he bestow his Inheritance.

But here it may be seasonably demanded, *what it is* that Gods Children do inherit, and are Heirs unto? That's a very great matter which does belong to such a business as this is, and which is worth the inquiry. Now, for this, the Scripture it self tells us, in Rev. 21. 7. He that overcometh shall inherit all things. That's a large and general expression, which may be reduced to two Heads especially: *First*, to the things of this present life. And *Secondly*, of that which is future. Godliness, it is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life which is now present, and of that which is to come.

First, For the things of this Life. They are Heirs of them: and have a special right and title to them. All things are yours, saies the Apostle; and amongst the rest he reckons the world, 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22. It is true, that these things are not their Portion: nor such as God would have them to make account of, as their greatest happiness. But yet they are oftentimes their possession, and such as do belong unto them. Gods Children they have an interest and a propriety, even in Temporal blessings: And such as none other else have besides themselves; for they have a sanctified right in them, and such as from whence they may be assured that the having, and enjoying of them, shall turn to their best advantage. Others, they may have a natural right in them, considered as men; and they may have a Civil right in them, as in such a rank and condition in the world, which is not to be denied unto them, nor to be taken from them upon the account of Religion. *Dominium non fundatur in Gratia*. But a Christian and spiritual right, that belongs not unto them: as being such as is proper only to the Children of God. These, they are not only Heirs to the things themselves, but to the comfort and benefit of them

also. As every good thing, which they partake of, serves to draw them so much the nearer to God.

And besides, as for the things themselves; they have so much of them, as God in his Fatherly wisdom thinks fitting and convenient for them, in the circumstances and conditions in which they are; that so they may not be too solicitous and distracted about them. No good thing will God withhold from them that walk uprightly. They are Heirs first of all, of the things of this Life. But,

Secondly, They are Heirs more especially of the things of a better: And they are reducible to two Heads, as the Scripture it self reduces them, *Psal. 84. 11. Grace, and Glory.* The one considered as the means; and the other, considered as the end. Gods Children they are Heirs of them both.

First, For *Grace and Holiness.* This is not a small kind of Portion, which Gods Children have an interest in, *2 Pet. 1. 3. He hath given to us all things pertaining to Life, and Godliness.* Not only to Life, but to Godliness; or if ye will to a Godly Life: by taking it in the propriety of the Hebrew Language. Heirs of the Grace of Life, *1 Pet. 3. 7.* All the Graces of the Spirit, they belong to the Children of God: and they are Heirs, as it were, of them. Our blessed Saviour, when he left the world, he bequeathed his Children, his Spirit; as in the comforts of it, so also in the Graces; in the several kinds, and distributions of them: Faith, and Patience, and Love, &c. And therefore we read of them sometimes in Scripture, as appropriated unto them; The Faith of Gods Elect, The Love of the Brethren, The Patience of the Saints, and the like; as being indeed properly theirs.

Secondly, Which is here principally to be understood; They are Heirs of Glory, and so frequently denominated. Heirs of Salvation, *Heb. 1. 14.* Heirs of the Kingdom, *Jam. 2. 5.* Heirs of Eternal Life, *Tit. 3. 7.* *Col. 1. 12.* Speaking of such kind of persons, Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of Saints in Light. And this Light, it is the Light of Glory. As again, in *Eph. 1. 18.* That ye may know what is the hope of his calling; and what the riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints. Gods Children are Heirs of no less than Glory, and Heaven it self.

Now this Inheritance (for the further Illustration of it unto us) is considerable in sundry Excellencies, and Qualifications, which do belong unto it: we may take notice of them all together, as they are comprized in that eminent Scripture, which makes mention of them, in *1 Pet. 3. 4, &c.*

First, It is Incorruptible, *Ἀφθαρτος*, that is, It is such as is not subject to outward Violence. As for the Inheritances of the world, even experience it self declares how much exposed they are to Corruption. The Moth, and the Canker corrupts them; and the Thief breaks thorough, and steals them, or does some injury to them. There are many who have had great Possessions, and very soon deprived of them all. But this Inheritance of Glory, it is inviolable. There is no touching, nor corrupting of it. In that day shall your heart rejoyce; and your Joy shall no man take away from you, saies our blessed Saviour to his Disciples, *Joh. 16. 22.* That is one Qualification: It is Incorruptible.

Secondly, It is undefiled, *Ἀκλυστος*. That is another great advantage, and benefit

benefit in an Inheritance, when there is no *stain*, nor *defilement* upon it. As for Inheritances amongst *men*, there is oftentimes a great deal of *pollution* adhering and sticking unto them. Forasmuch as they are got now and then by *unlawful means*: By Bribery, by Cozenage, by Oppression, by Extortion, and the like. Whosoever they be, that shall leave Estates after this manner to their Children, they will leave them but a *defiled* Inheritance; and such as will at last prove *pernicious*. But now the Inheritance of the Children of God, it hath none of *this* disparagement upon it. Forasmuch as it is attained by *such means*, as tend to *holiness* and *purity* in them.

Again, as *undefiled* for the *getting* of it: so *undefiled* also for the *Improvement*.

Thirdly, It is an Inheritance that *fades not away*, *ἡ ἀβύστος*, That is another Qualification. There is no Inheritance here upon *Earth*, but it is subject to *fading* and *decay*. It is not only *corruptible*, by violence from others: but it is likewise perishable in the Nature of the thing, and by little and little may be *consumed*. Indeed it is that which some Gallants, and Heirs sometimes in the world do hardly believe, when they have great and rich Inheritances left them now and then by their Parents, they think they will never be at an *End*; whereas experience shows them the contrary: That it is an Inheritance that *fades away*. Yea, but this now whereof we here speak, it has no such *disparagement* upon it. The riches of Grace here, and the riches of Glory hereafter, they are such as shall never fade away: especially the latter: It is an *immortescible*, and an *Eternal Crown* of *Glory*.

Fourthly and lastly, It is such as is *Reserved* for them in Heaven, *ἡ ἐκείνη* *ἐν ἡμέραις*. It is such as is carefully kept and *laid up* for them; and shall at last most surely and fully be *bestowed* upon them. And this is another particular, wherein it differs from Inheritances of the world: For these, though they are sometimes left, yet they are not alwaies preserved, but now and then fall into *ill hands*, which deprive the right Heirs, and true owners of them. But this Inheritance of the Saints, it is *not so*, it is an Inheritance reserved: And as we are kept for it, in the next Verse, *Kept by the Power of God through Faith unto salvation*: So is it also kept for us; and shall in time be *actually bestowed* upon us.

This we have assured unto us by the *first-fruits* of the Spirit within us. We may see what we are likely to have hereafter, by what already we partake of here, in the *beginnings* of Heaven to us. Therefore to this purpose is the Holy Ghost called the *earnest* of our Inheritance, in sundry places, as Eph. 1. 13. *In whom after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our Inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession*; that is indeed till the possession of the purchased redemption. So 2 Cor. 1. 22. and 2 Cor. 5. 5. *Who hath given the Earnest of the Spirit in our hearts*. Look as an *Earnest*, it is both part of payment, which is made *already*; as likewise an *Assurance* of payment in full, to be made in due time: So is the Holy Ghost in the hearts of Believers; both a *beginning* of Heaven to them at present, and likewise an Assurance of the full possession of it, for time to come. And this for the *Nature* and *Quality* of this Inheritance of the Children of God; *Incorruptible, undefiled, that fades not away, reserved*.

Now another thing here by the way may very fitly be inquired into by us:
And

And that is *thus*; Namely, in what *Proportion this* Inheritance of the Saints is *dispensed*, and distributed unto them? Because it is said here, That they *all* have a share in this Business. Where, for our satisfaction, we must know thus much, That though *all* Gods Children (as we have heard) are *Heirs*; and Heirs likewise of Eternal Happiness and Glory; yet they are not all of them in the same degree and measure partakers of it; *But one star differeth from another star in Glory*, 1 Cor. 15. 4. As a Father may give Portions to all his Children; but *one* may have a greater Portion than the rest. It is said of *Elkanah* in his carriage to *Hannah*; that he gave her a *worthy* Portion, or as some read it a *double* Portion. *Manah achath apaym*, as it is in the Hebrew Text, 1 Sam. 1. And *Benjamins* lot from *Joseph*, it was *five times* as much, as of the *rest of his Brethren*. Thus is it likewise in Gods Dispensations. He gives a Portion to *all* his Children; but he *gives not* the same Portion to them all. Though the same for *kind*, and *specification*: yet not the same for *degrees* and *intention*. All the Saints shall *come to Heaven*: but some may go *further* in than the *rest*. And all Believers shall have *Glory*: but some shall have a *greater measure of Glory*. Look as it is on the other side, in point of *punishment*, and *Condemnation*: Though all that live and die in their sins without Repentance, shall go to *Hell*: yet some shall be *deeper* in it than *others*, according to the *greatness of sins* which have been committed by them. Even so *here* also in point of *reward*, and the bestowing of *Eternal Life*; All the Saints and Children of God shall be made partakers of a glorious Inheritance: but the *distribution* of it shall be different unto them. Every Vessel shall be full, but *some* Vessels are *larger* than others: And according to the proportion of the *capacity*, shall be the *proportion of Glory*.

Therefore this should stir us all up to an endeavour after the greatest measure *that may be*; Not as though we had already attained, &c. Phil. 3. 12. The Sons of *Zebedee* had an ambitious desire of preheminance in the Kingdom of Christ, after an earthly and carnal manner; for which they were rebuked by him. But there is a *spiritual* desire of such an excellency, and superiority, which is lawful and commendable in us; when by the exercise of the greatest Grace here in *this* life, we make way for the greatest Glory in the Life to come. And this is that now which we should cherish in our selves; yea, and hereby also *quicken* our selves in all the waies of obedience and fruitfulness; with *Moses* to respect the recompence of the reward; and with our Saviour, Enduring the Cross, and despising the shame for the Joy which was set before him. So much by the way for that: The Inequality of future Glory.

And now for the *Use and Application* of the whole Doctrine it self, to our selves. We may draw it forth in a *threefold Improvement* especially: *First*, Here is that which may satisfy Gods Children, which are in a *mean and low condition* here in the world; as it is *possible* for them to be, and as sometimes they are. Though they may be *destitute* of many things *here*, yet they are Heirs of *Heaven*. And this is that which may *sustain* them, and support them in the condition, in which they are. Take some great and rich Heir abroad, which is travelling in a *far Country*: though he may not have those accommodations *there*, which he might haply wish *for*, or *desire*; yet he comforts himself with these thoughts, That he is sure to have enough when

when he comes home. He has these and these *Lands and Revenues*; yea, it may be a whole Kingdom or two, which he is an Heir to, and in time shall enjoy. The same may be also the thoughts and encouragements of the *Children of God*.

And by the way, it may teach also *others* how to esteem them, and to carry themselves towards them, in the midst of the meanest conditions which befall them here in this life: Namely, to look upon them as *Heirs apparent* to the Crown of Glory. We see how men here in the world, account of the Heirs of *Princes*; and what respect, upon all occasion, they are ready to give unto them. And that even now and then in *their affliction*, and sometimes in an *exile condition*. And how should we then learn to do this likewise to the *Heirs of Glory*. This is very well urged, and set home by the Apostle *James*; speaking to those who contemned the poor Saints and *Servants of God*: *Hearken* (saies he) *my beloved Brethren*: *Hath not God chosen the poor of this world: rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom? But ye have despised the poor, &c.* As who should say, Does any one use to contemn, or despise great and rich Heirs? Why this is that which you do: while ye despise the poor *Servants of Christ*, which are *Heirs of Glory*. But,

Secondly, It further teaches Gods Children to live answerably to this Noble Condition, and the Inheritance which they are appointed unto. *First*, in an holy Magnanimity and Nobleness of *Spirit*. Those that are great Heirs (except they do exceedingly degenerate) they do scorn to interest themselves in base and inferiour services. *Their Estates*, for the most part, put an height of Spirit into them: And so it should be likewise with those who are the Heirs of *Heaven*. They should think themselves too good, to ingage themselves in the waies of sin. *What, should such a man as I do this? No, I will not*, saies good *Nehemiah*: And so in like manner should it be the purpose and resolution of the Saints and *Servants of God*.

Secondly, In making good their Titles: and clearing their evidences for *Heaven*. Those who are great Heirs, they are careful to make good their *Inheritances*; and to prove their right and interest in them: And so it should be likewise with those who are the Heirs of *Salvation*: They should take heed of doing any thing, as from whence either themselves or others might call in question their right unto it.

Thirdly, In more chearful service, and obedience to Gods commands. We should henceforth serve him not as bare hirelings, but as those who are *Sons and Heirs*. Not as those, who look only for wages, and a reward here in this world: but as those who look for a *Portion*, and Inheritance in the world to come.

Fourthly, Take heed of losing it, and parting with it, upon any terms whatsoever. Take heed of *Esau*, that parted with his *Birth-right*. And remember *Naboth*, that would not part with his *Inheritance*: No more should we do with ours, in any case, or upon any condition whatsoever. And that's the second improvement.

Thirdly and lastly, Seeing Gods Children are *Heirs*, and are Heirs of *Glory*; we see then from hence the vanity of those persons, who would make *Salvation* to be a matter of *Merit*. For though it be given to those that do labour, and that work it out: yet it is not given upon the account of working, but upon the account of *Adoption*. Now *Adoption*; it is not a matter of merit, but a matter of *Grace*; and accordingly it uses to be defined, by those who

who are *vers'd* in such matters. *Adoptio est gratuita assumptio persona non habentis jus in hereditate, ad participationem hereditatis.* Adoption is the free admission of a person that has no right to the Inheritance, to the participation of the Inheritance. This is the Notion and description which the *Schoolmen* give of it. Now this then it is *Exclusive* of all *merit*, or *desert*, as pertinent unto it. And so I have done with the *First General Part* of the Text, which is the Privilege it self belonging to the Children of God, by virtue of their Adoption, and that is an *Inheritance, If Children then Heirs.*

The *Second* is the *Explication*, or *Amplification* of this Privilege to them; and that consists of *two Branches*: The *first* is taken from the *Person* that they are Heirs of: *Heirs of God.* And the *second* is taken from the *Person*, that they are Heirs with: *Joynt-heirs with Christ.*

We begin with the *first* of these Branches, *viz.* The *Person* that they are Heirs of: *Heirs of God,* *κατακληρονόμοι θεῷ.* This is added here by the Apostle *Paul*: both by way of *Explication*, and of *Inlargement.* When we hear that Gods Children are *Heirs*, we might be ready, it may be, presently to dream of some *earthly* Inheritance. As the *Disciples* when *Christ* told them of a *Kingdom*, their thoughts were at the first pitch'd upon a *Kingdom here upon Earth*; therefore this is added to explain it, *Heirs of God.*

Now this again may be taken two manner of waies: Either *Relativè*, or *Objectivè*: Either as a Designation of the *Person himself*, whom they are Heirs unto; or as a Description of the *Portion* it self, which they do *inherit.* They are Heirs of *God*, as the *Giver* of the Inheritance. And they are Heirs of *God*, as the *Inheritance it self*, which is given unto them.

First, They are so *Relativè.* Heirs of *God*, as related to him for such a purpose as this is. It is he that does intitle them to all the things, which they do either enjoy, or *hope for.* This is some advantage to them, and that very great: *First*, in point of Dignity and Honour. To be Heir to some bale and unworthy Person, who has got an Estate by some sinister courses; men do esteem it no great honour or advancement to them, though they may have great matters by them: But now those that are Heirs of *God*, they have a *worthy, and an honourable* Inheritance. There's some credit in being Heir unto him.

Secondly, In point of Profit: *Heirs of God.* *Heirs of God*: therefore not only honourable, but *rich.* They must needs be *great Heirs*, because he is *great himself*, and has great Revenues, whom they are Heirs unto. 1 Cor. 10. 26. *The Earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof*; Yea, not only *Earth*, but *Heaven* too: we may take them both together. Gen. 14. 19. *The most high God, Possessor of Heaven and Earth.* So Deut. 10. 14. *Behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens is the Lords thy God: The Earth also with all that therein is.*

Thirdly, In point of *Conveniency*, and *Accommodation.* There is a great matter, in point of Inheritance, The manner of ordering and disposing of it, to the *best advantage* of him that shall Heir it; and as to the *circumstances*, wherewith he does enjoy it: And this is in being Heir to *God.* That's the first Notion of it: *Relativè.*

Secondly, *Heirs of God*: By taking the words *Materialiter*, and *Objectivè*, that is, they are such as do inherit *God himself.* He that is their

their Father, is also their Portion: And he which gives them the Inheritance, is the Inheritance it self, which he gives them. Sometimes the Lord is pleased to account his people to be *his* Inheritance; *The Lords Portion is his People: Jacob is the lot of his Inheritance*, Deut. 32. 9. And sometimes again he is pleased to declare himself to be *theirs*. Thus we shall find it, not only here, but in some other places; as *Psal. 73. 25, 26. whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth, that I desire besides thee. My flesh, and my heart faileth me: But God is the strength of my heart, and my Portion for ever.* So *Lam. 3. 24. The Lord is my Portion, saith my soul: therefore will I hope in him.* And *Psal. 16. 5. The Lord is the Portion of mine Inheritance, and of my cup: thou maintainest the lot, &c.* This is that which God promises to Abraham, *Gen. 15. 1. Fear not, Abraham: I am thy shield, and thine exceeding great reward.* And *Gen. 17. 1. I am God all-sufficient: walk before me, &c.*

Now, for the opening of this Point unto us: that we may know what this business is of inheriting God himself: The meaning of it is this, to have full interest in all his Attributes, which are made over to us for our good. This is the happiness of all Gods Children, That they are heirs of God thus. His wisdom is theirs, to direct them. His power is theirs, to preserve them. His goodness is theirs, to relieve them. His Justice is theirs, to avenge them. His faithfulness is theirs, to support them, and to keep them from discouragement. There is nothing considerable in God, but his People have a share in it, and may upon occasion, claim it for their proper Portion, and as belonging to themselves: They are not only Heirs to him, but Heirs of him.

This is still a further ground of comfort and encouragement to them: Even the poorest and meanest amongst them. That they are not only Heirs of heaven, but even of God himself; and have him for their Portion; which is more than to inherit all the world, and Creatures which are in it. And beloved, we should learn to live, and to subsist in the power of such truths as these are, and not look upon them as meer words. We have them sometimes in the Notion, and they are points which go for current amongst us, in a speculative way: But we do not improve them as we should, and as it becomes us to do: If we did, it would be a great deal better with us, than many times, and for the most part it is. We should not walk so heavily, and disconsolately, as many times we do, but rather lift up our heads with Joy.

Every Good, is so much the more excellent, and the rather to be prized by us, as it is any thing more large and comprehensive; and is containing of other things in it. Why, thus it is now to be an Heir of God: we have in him every thing else. All the Beams of Comfort in the Creature; they are derived from this Sun. And all the Streams of Delight in other things, they are conveyed from this Spring: so that he, who has this, has them: and accordingly may make account of it with himself.

And so again, In the want of other things, he may very much comfort himself in this. Alas, what are the Stars to the Sun? And what are the Streams to the Fountain? And what are the Rivers to the Ocean? Why, thus are all the things in the world, to him that made both it and

them; they are all far inferiour to him, and short of him. These thoughts being well and thoroughly digested, will be of very great efficacy to us, and influence upon us: both for the settling and composing of our Affections; and for the ordering and regulating of our Conversation. A Child of God, is an Heir of God himself; not only in regard of his Relation, as belonging unto him: but also in regard of his Condition, as inheriting of him: The Lord himself is his Portion. So much for that: And so ye have the first Branch of the Explication taken from the Person, that God's Children are Heirs of, Heirs of God, both Relatively, and also Materially.

The Second is taken from the Person, whom they are Heirs with. And that is in these words, Joynt-heirs with Christ, Συγκατακληρονόμοι ὡς Χριστῷ. Believers, they do partake of the same Inheritance with the Son of God himself: They are Heirs together with him. Where (to speak of this passage distinctly) there are two things considerable in it: First, as that which is imply'd: That Christ himself is an Heir. Secondly, as that which is exprest: That Gods Children are Heirs with him; and do communicate in this Inheritance.

First, Here is this imply'd: That Christ himself is an Heir: and an Heir of God. Thus Heb. 1. 2. He is called the Heir of all things. This he is Jure Naturæ, as he is the Son of God by Nature. As the Son hath all which is the Fathers: so hath Christ all that belongs to God. Whatsoever is Gods, is also his. An Heir is Lord of all, saies the Apostle, Gal. 4. 1. And so also is Christ.

Again, besides, As He is an Heir by Nature: so He is also an Heir by Donation. Therefore He is said, in the place before alledged, to be appointed Heir, &c. ὡς υἱοὺς καὶ κληρονόμους. The Father hath given all things to Christ, Matth. 11. 27. All things are given unto me of my Father. Thus He is Heir both of all things, and of all Persons. Psal. 2. 8. Ask of me, and I will give the Heathen for thine Inheritance; and the uttermost parts of the Earth for thy Possession. Thus is Christ an Heir by Gift.

Therefore we see what great cause we have to please him: and to endeavour to be in favour with him. We see how it is amongst men: How careful they are to give contentment to an Heir, if it be but of some ordinary Inheritance: And how much more should we then ingratiate our selves with Christ, who is Gods Heir, and Heir of all things; whatsoever is amiable, whether in Heaven or Earth? The contrary hereunto is the Temper and Disposition of those, who do from hence rather set against Christ, as it is exprest to us in the Parable in the Gospel, Matth. 21. 38. This is the Heir, come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his Inheritance. That's the first thing, which is here imply'd: That Christ himself is an Heir.

The Second is that which is exprest: That as Christ himself is an Heir: so Gods Children are Heirs also with him. Gal. 4. 7. Through Christ. Thus Revel. 3. 21. To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne: Even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father

ther in his Throne. So Matth. 19. 28. when the Son of man shall sit down on the Throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve Thrones judging the twelve Tribes of Israel.

This must needs be so: First, In regard of that Union which is knit betwixt Christ and his Church. Gods Children, they are Members of Christ, therefore they must be Heirs with him. Thus 1 Cor. 3. 22. All is yours: for you are Christs; and Christ is Gods. Therefore is Christ an Heir, because he is Gods: And therefore are Believers Heirs, because they are Christs. As the Wife, by her Marriage with her Husband she partakes of his Estate: so we, by our espousals to Christ, do partake of his Inheritance. In him, we have obtained the Inheritance, Eph. 1. 11, &c. And hence we meet with answerable expressions: The first-born among many Brethren, Rom. 8. 29. The first-born of every Creature, Col. 1. 15. The first-born from the Dead, in Revel. 1. 5. and Col. 1. 18. That in all things, or among all Persons he might have the preheminance.

Secondly, This is grounded in his Promise, which he hath made to us: As the Father hath promised it on his part, as I shewed before: So Christ has also promised it on his part; as we may see in the places before alledged: To him that overcometh will I give, &c.

Thirdly, His Prayer for us, Joh. 17. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. Father, I will, that those, whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am, that they may behold my Glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the Foundation of the world, &c.

Fourthly, His Office towards us, as He is the Mediatour of the Church. Therefore all things which come to us, they must come to us through his hands: And so amongst the rest, our Inheritance. We must be Heirs in his right, &c.

Now the Use of all to our selves comes to this: First, we see here how nearly it concerns us, to find our selves to be ingrafted into Christ, and to become Members of him. If those who are Heirs of Salvation, they must be Joynt-heirs with Christ; then those who are not Members of Christ, they are from henceforth no Heirs at all. And therefore let us look to this: and examine how it is with us in this particular, which we may much discern, according to the frame of our Spirit; the Affections, and Dispositions, which are in us; and the Principles, which we are led and carried by.

Secondly, We may from hence see the Certainty, and Infallibility of a Christians Salvation: We are Joynt-heirs with Christ. Therefore he being glorified, we shall be glorified also. He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, saies the Apostle, in Ephes. 2. 6. As there is no keeping of Christ from his Inheritance: so neither is there any keeping of Christs Members from theirs. They hold their Lands in Capite; which, what ever it may be, as to Earthly Inheritances, as to Spiritual is the best tenure of all, and of greatest assurance.

Thirdly, We should hence learn to Love Christ, and to give him the glory of all: considering, that all we have, it is from him, and by him. If we are Elected, we are elected in Christ. If we are Justified, we are justified for Christ. If we are Sanctified, we are sanctified through Christ.

Christ. If we are *Glorified*, we are glorified with Christ, from Eternity in Predestination; to Eternity in Glorification: Christ is all in all unto us. And therefore we should be careful to do all in reference to him; and to the Honour and Glory of him. And so I have done with the Second General Part of the Text, which is the Explication of the Privilege of Gods Children, in regard of their Inheritance, in both the Branches of it; both as to the Person whom they are Heirs of, Heirs of God: and as to the Person, whom they are Heirs with, Heirs with Christ. And so with the whole Text it self, in the First Branch of this seventeenth Verse. And if Children, then Heirs; Heirs of God, and Joynt-heirs with Christ.

SER-

S E R M O N XX.

ROMANS 8. 17.

If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.

There is nothing more requisite, or convenient for the Children of God, than first of all upon good grounds to be perswaded that they are his Children; And then to be perswaded of the Excellency and Happiness of such a Condition. Now accordingly each of these are here undertaken and pursued by the Apostle Paul in this present Scripture. He proves that Believers are Gods Children by divers and sundry Arguments, as we have formerly heard. Because they are led by the Spirit of God, because they cry, Abba, Father: Because besides the Testimony of their own spirits within them, they have the spirit of God himself, joyning with them, and declaring as much unto them.

And as for the Excellency and Happiness of this Condition, that he likewise proves from the Consequents and Concomitants of it, That being Children they are thereupon heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, which was that which we handled, and dispatched the last day.

Now because to this might haply be objected, That notwithstanding all this, they are oftentimes full of troubles and afflictions here in this life, which seems not to be so suitable and agreeable to such kind of persons, as had so near a relation to God, as is pretended to them: for thus he intimates that this is so far from being any argument against it, as it rather makes for it. For then they are heirs with Christ, if so be they suffer with him, and their present sufferings are attended with future Glory. If so be we suffer with him, that we may be also &c. This is the coherence of the words.
Now —

IN the Text it self there are two General parts considerable. The *supposition*, and the *Inference*. The *supposition* that is in these words, *If so be we suffer with Christ*. The *Inference* that is in these, *That we may be also glorified together*. We begin with the *First* of these parts, viz. The *supposition*: *If so be that ye suffer with him*. Wherein we have the Condition of Gods Children here in this world propounded, and laid forth unto us two manner of wayes. *First*, In its *Absolute* Consideration; and *Secondly*, In its *Relative*. Its *Absolute* Consideration; that is, That it is a *state of suffering*. Its *Relative* Consideration; that is, That it is a suffering *with Christ*.

First;

First, Here's the Condition of Gods Children considered absolutely. And that is, that it is a state of suffering, *If so be that we suffer*. The Apostle Paul here supposes it and takes it for granted. This *If* here, it is not an *If* of Doubting, or Ambiguity; but an *If* of Certainty, and Assurance. And signifies as much as *seeing that*, or *forasmuch as*; *Si* is here equivalent to *Cum*. This is the Lot and Portion of Gods servants, whiles they live here in the world, to be exposed to affliction and suffering. And this is that which the Scripture does abundantly declare unto us in sundry places of it, as 2 Tim. 3. 12. *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer Persecution*. And Act. 14. 22. *We must through many Tribulations enter into the Kingdom of God*. And Psal. 3. 4. *Many are the Troubles of the righteous*.

Not to stand upon the proof of that by Testimony, which Experience does so frequently evidence, we may take some account of it in their particulars. *First*, There's somewhat for it in their Nature, which they have in common with other men. It is the lot and condition of a man, as a man, to be subject to affliction, Job. 5. 7. *Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward*; that is, by a Natural propensity and inclination thereunto; and as that, which is very quickly done. This is so both by virtue of Gods Appointment and Ordination, who hath so set it since the fall of man: as also by virtue of the Principles whereof man consists; having a Body of clay, and a mind full of vanity and weakness. And withall in regard of the uncertainty and vanity of these outward things which he receives comfort from. Thus there is ground for the suffering of Believers, which is founded even in Humane Nature.

But *Secondly*, Not only so, but more particularly which is founded in Grace; and that holy Profession which they bear upon them. Take them under the notion of Gods Children precisely considered, and as the Disciples of Christ: And so is their Condition a suffering Condition in that regard also. And there are two things again here which make for it. The one is the Malice and Hatred of the world: And the other is the Love and Providence of God towards them. Each of these do lay a Ground and Foundation for the sufferings and afflictions of Gods Children here in this Life.

First, (I say) The Malice and Hatred of the world. This is oftentimes active to this purpose. Those whom men hate, they will afflict, and disturb, if it lies in their power; Why thus it is now, with men of the world, for the most part, to the Children of God. They may say as Ahab did sometime of Micajah, *I hate him*; for so indeed they do. The seed of the woman, and the seed of the Serpent; the son of the Bond-woman, and the son of the Free, they are opposite and contrary, and cannot endure or abide one another. There's an irreconcilable hatred betwixt them: and this Hatred it does usually express it self in all occasions of Trouble and Disquietness: *wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous, but who can stand before Envy*? as it is Prov. 27. 4.

Secondly, There's also the Goodness of God; and his wise Providence towards his servants, which has an Influence hereupon likewise. God will have his People here in this world to suffer for divers reasons.

As *First*, For the Tryal and Exercise of their Graces. Thus 1 Pet. 1. 7. *That the Tryal of your Faith, being much more precious than of Gold that perisbeth, though it be tryed with fire, might be found unto honour and praise and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ*. And so 1 Pet. 4. 12. *Think*

not

not strange concerning the fiery tryal, which is to try you, as if some strange, &c. This trying of them is not so much in reference to God, who knows already well enough what is in them: But partly for themselves, that they may from hence know their own weakness or strength; and partly also in reference to others, that they may be convinced of what they are.

Secondly, God orders Afflictions to his Children; thereby to wear off that rust, which is in them; and to take away their defilements from them, as it is in *Esa. 27. 9.* *This is the fruit of Jacob's punishment, to purge away his sin.* Affliction, it has a purging and scouring quality in it, where it pleases God to sanctifie it and to let it home upon the party afflicted. It makes men to enter into themselves, and to consider their own evil wayes, whereby they have brought such evils upon them. And accordingly to turn away from them. Thus *Hos. 2. 6.* God speaks concerning his Church, *That he will hedge up her way with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths.* When Gods Children are at any time running loose, and going astray from him, he layes somewhat in their way to obstruct them, and hinder them, and take them off.

Thirdly, To wean them from the world, and an inordinate love of these things here below, and to make them more willing to be gone, when he calls for them. Every outward comfort, and contentment, where it is enjoy'd in fulness and abundance, it is apt, without a great deal of care and watchfulness, to possess the heart, and to fasten it to a love of the Creature: It makes men to play loth to depart, even when as otherwise there is cause for it. Now the Cross it does here much qualifie mens Affections in this particular, and does abate of the fervour of them. Indeed, it is the more kindly way for us to be weaned from the world upon consideration of better things to come, rather than out of a tediousness and irksomness of any thing here. But yet rather than fail, God is fain to take such a course as this sometimes with us, by mingling these conditions to us, To put Aloes upon these breasts of Comfort, that so he may wean us from them.

Lastly, In Fatherly Discipline, to keep his Children regular and in good order, and to prevent them from worse things to come: *1 Cor. 11. 32.* *when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we might not be condemned with the world.* And *Job 33. 16, 17, &c.* *Then he openeth the Ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, That he may withdraw pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword, &c.*

The Consideration of this Point may be thus far useful to us. First, As it serves to teach us Patience under those Tryals which God at any time in his Providence exercises us withall, we see it is the Lot and portion even of those who are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, and therefore we may not think much of it, or repine at it. What are we better than others, that we should think we deserve to be privileged or exempted rather than others? If this be the condition of Gods Children, we have so much the more cause to submit to it, and to be contented with it.

Secondly, We learn hence also to expect it, and to prepare for it: And that when at any time for the present we are freed from it: Because it is that which is incident to us, even to the best that are. There's a double work which lyes upon Christians in a prosperous Condition. The one is to be careful in avoiding of the sins which that Condition inclines to: And the other

other is to prepare for a worse, and lay up in store a stock of Grace against the Time of Affliction. Evils when they come unexpected, they come with so much the greater Disadvantage: And those, who in time of rest have not prepared for trouble, they find it the more difficult to conquer it when trouble indeed comes upon them. Their security adds to their Affliction: Yea though trouble should not come in the Event, yet it is not amiss to have grace to be fitted to it: As a man that provides against raine and storms, even at such time as the weather is fair, and Sun-shine, &c.

Thirdly, We learn from hence also to take heed of passing rash censure either upon our selves or other men, occasionally from these Conditions. First, Not upon our selves as hated, or neglected by God, as we are ready to do. It is usual and ordinary with us, to judge of our selves by such things as these are. If the Lord be with us, sayes Gideon, how then is all this befallen us? Judg. 6. 13. And Sion, when she was under affliction, she cried, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me, Esa. 49. 14. Thus we are apt (I say) to do. But we learn otherwise from this passage here before us; we may be Gods Children, even then when we are afflicted; nay from thence we may be so much the rather assured that we are so. Affliction it is a Seal of our Adoption, and which together with somewhat else does give us the greater Evidence of it. We see even here in the Text, as soon as ever there was mention of the one, there follows a mention of the other as suitable to it: and that by way of condition, If so be, &c. And so the Scripture elsewhere sets it. As Revel. 3. 19. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. And so more expressly likewise, Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8, &c. whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If then ye endure chastisement, God dealeth with you as with sons, for what son is there whom the Father chasteneth not? But, if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye Bastards, and not Sons, &c. where we see that Affliction is so far from excluding us from Gods Children, as that it does rather prove us to be so. As implying that God is unwilling to give us up to the vanities of other persons; and our own evil and corrupt hearts. And therefore we may not in this case pass hard censure upon our selves.

No, nor yet Secondly upon other men neither. This was the weakness of Job's Friends, who concluded him presently to be an Hypocrite, because Gods hand was heavy upon him. No, this is no good Argument. Even Gods Children themselves, may suffer affliction: Yea not only may but must, and shall suffer in one kind or other, whosoever they be: If not in their own Persons, yet at least by sympathy with others. And if not from the smitings of the hand: yet at least from the Tongue: though not as Abel suffered from Cain, yet as Isaac suffered from Ishmael; By hatred, and scorn, and reproach and such things as these. There's no man that looks after goodness, but he shall be sure to have some other to malice him, and to owe him an ill turn where he has an opportunity for it. Those who with Isaac are the Children of promise shall with him, be envied and scoffed at. And as then, He that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit: so is it now, sayes the Apostle, Gal. 4. 29. And so much may be spoken of the state of Gods Children in its Absolute Consideration, viz. A state of Suffering.

Now the Second is, as it is considerable Relatively; and that is, That it is a suf-

a suffering with Christ, *If we suffer with him, ~~κατασχεμα~~*. This *Him* is not exprest in the *Original*, but it is very fitly supplied in the *Translation*, and is implied in the scope of the Text, which plainly makes for it: And so there is this in it, That the sufferings of Believers are the sufferings of Christ himself. Thus we shall find them to be denominated in other places, as 2 Cor. 1. 5. *As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our Consolation also aboundeth by Christ.* So 2 Cor. 4. 10. *Alwayes bearing about in the Body the dying of the Lord Jesus.* And Gal. 6. 17. *I bear in my Body the marks of the Lord Jesus.* Col. 1. 24. *who rejoyce in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the Afflictions of Christ in my Flesh.* This they are call'd,

First, From that *Mystical union* which is betwixt him and us. As by vertue of this union, that which is *his*, is *ours*: so by vertue of the same union, that which is *ours*, is also *his*. As therefore *his inheritance* is ours, and we are *joynt-heirs*; so therefore, our Afflictions are his, and we do likewise suffer with him, and he with us, Or,

Secondly, By way of *Sympathy* and *Compassion*, we suffer with Him, and He suffers with us, in a suitableness, and correspondency of affection. That as we are presently apprehensive of any Indignity, which is offered to him: so he is also sensible of any injury which is offered to us. In all their Affliction he was afflicted or straitened, as it is there in that place, *Esa. 63. 9.* And so *Heb. 4. 15.* *We have not an high-Priest that cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities. But was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities two manner of wayes, both in a way of *Passion*, and in a way of *Compassion*: In a way of *Passion*, as he suffered in kind, those very infirmities, which we suffer, in his own Person: And in a way of *Compassion*; as he bare a tender affection and pity to us in our sufferings. As he is a merciful High-Priest, which he is called, *Heb. 2. 17.*

Thirdly, The sufferings of Gods Children are called the sufferings of Christ, forasmuch as it is He that strengthens them, and enables them for to suffer them. We suffer with him, so far forth as we suffer from him; and as we suffer by him. *With him*; that is, with his Assistance, and through his Inablement, and by Power communicated from him. The Godly have a supply from Christ for the enduring of that, which they endure. And their sufferings are in that respect his.

Fourthly and lastly, and (if we will) principally, They are the sufferings of Christ, forasmuch as they are in Christs cause, and for the particular things which he suffered; that is, indeed for righteousness sake, and the doing of that which is good. Thus *Psal. 38. 20.* *They that hate me are many in number, because I follow the thing that good is:* Thus *1 Pet. 3. 17, 18.* *For it is better if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil-doing. For Christ also hath suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, &c.* This is agreeable to that of our Saviour, *Matth. 5. 11, 12.* *Blessed are ye, when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil falsely of you for my names sake. Rejoice, &c.* which is not so much to be understood in regard of the Enemies carriage; (which considered simply in it self is rather matter of sorrow, than of joy) but in regard of our own behaviour, which has occasioned this in them, and the good effect which will follow upon

it. It is sad in regard of *them*, but it is joyful in regard of *us*, when it happens to be *thus with us*.

The Use of this Point thus explained comes to this. *First*, Here's matter of *Terror* to all those, who are *Enemies to Gods Servants*, and do any thing endeavour to *afflict them*, or to be injurious to them. They may think, that their enmity reaches only to some *poor silly men*. Oh but there's somewhat more than so in it; It extends even to Christ himself, who counts himself as concern'd in it; as he said once to *Paul* in his journey to *Damascus*: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* The Afflicting of Gods Servants upon Earth, it is an Afflicting of Christ in Heaven.

Secondly, It is a great Comfort to Gods Children in all the sufferings, which do at any time befall them, That herein they do but *pledge Christ himself*, who has begun in this cup unto them. We read in *Act. 21*. how the *Apostles* rejoiced, that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And *Heb. 11. 25, 26*. It is said of *Moses*, Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasure of Egypt. For he had respect, &c. And so *St. Peter* exhorts us to this purpose, *1 Pet. 4. 13, 14*. Rejoice in as much as ye are partakers of Christs sufferings. That when his Glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding Joy, &c. It is a great comfort to any to have a Companion. Especially to be in the same condition with one's nearest Friends. And thus it is here. Here's a Communion with Christ Himself: And so the Apostle *Paul* expresses it, in regard of himself, *Phil. 3. 10*. speaking of Christ, That I may know him, and the power of his Resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his Death. He rejoiced in his Conformity to Christ, in his Death, and Sufferings.

Thirdly, This teaches also Christians, not to rest themselves contented in this, That they suffer: but to observe both *how* and *what* they suffer for, *what* they suffer for as to the Cause of their suffering; and *how* they suffer, as to the Manner and carriage of their suffering: each of which have a necessary influence upon this business of suffering with Christ; and are most requisite Ingredients to the making, and constituting of it. This was that which the same Apostle so much gloried in, and triumphed in, in regard of himself, That he was an Embassador in Bonds for the Gospel, *Eph. 6. 19, 20*. And though speaking to that purpose he says, *2 Tim. 2. 9*. That he suffered as an evil doer, we are not to understand it, of what he was as to his own behaviour; but what he was as to the thoughts and carriage of his Enemies towards him. They counted him as an evil doer, and they handled him as an evil doer: and so he suffered as an evil doer in that sense, but he was not an evil doer in the thing it self, as the just cause and ground of his suffering. And so now I have done with the first General Part of the Text, which is the supposition in those words, *If so be we suffer with him*. Wherein we have had two Particulars exhibited. *First*, The state of Gods Children Absolutely, and that is a state of suffering. And *Secondly*, The state of Gods Children Relatively, and that is a suffering with Christ.

The *Second* is the Inference in these words, *That we may be also glorified together*. Which passage (for the right concurring of it) seems to carry a twofold Emphasis with it, an exclusive and an inclusive. According to the

Exclusive

Exclusive Emphasis; so the sense is this, That there's no coming to Glory, but by suffering. According to the *Inclusive* Emphasis; so the sense is this, That Glory is consequent upon suffering. We shall take notice of both.

First, To look upon this Passage, according to the *Exclusive* Emphasis: and so, I say there's this in it, That there is no coming to Glory but by suffering: If so be we suffer, we shall; that is, unless we suffer, we shall not. Suffering, it is the beaten path to Glory, and that common road, which all take that come to that End. Thus in the place before alledged, we must through many Tribulations enter into the Kingdom of God.

Now there's a *various Account*, which may be given hereof unto us. *First*, That herein we may be conformable to Christ our head. He has beaten this road before us, and therefore we may not think much to travel in it after him, and it was the Method that was observed by him. As ye may see by that passage of his to the Disciples that were going to Emmaus, Luk. 24. 26. O ye fools, and slow of heart to believe, &c. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and (then) to enter into his Glory. There is suffering mentioned before Entrance into Glory, as antecedent and preparatory thereunto. And so Heb. 2. 10. It became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to Glory, to make the Captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings. See here, Perfect through sufferings, as that which was required to be endured by him in order to his perfection. And therefore it is said that for the Joy that was set before him, he endured the Cross, Heb. 12. 2.

Secondly, Suffering goes before Glory, thereby to set a greater price upon Glory it self, and to make it so much the more Glorious. We never take so much notice of any Comfort, as when it is ushered in with the contrary grievance, and Heaven is never more Heaven to Gods Children when once they come thither, than after some Crosses here in the world. This is like an Haven of rest to the Marriner when he has been tost upon the Seas. This is like a bed of Downe to the Traveller, which has been wearied in the way. *Quale sopor sessis in gramine* — As the Poet expresses it. Look as it was sometime with the Israelites, in their passage to the Earthly Canaan, the Land of Promise, God would bring them thereunto through a long and tedious Wilderness: so likewise in the passage of Christians to this heavenly Canaan which is above, God will have them to pass through a world of troubles and afflictions, that so hereby they may see the difference betwixt these two estates and conditions, and make Heaven to be so much the sweeter at last.

Thirdly, That so by this means he may in some manner fit us for glory, and prepare us and dispose us thereunto. Col. 1. 12. The Apostle uss this expression, Giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of Saints in light, inasmuch, who hath fitted us for it. Every one is not fitted for Heaven, who perhaps may yet desire to come thither. Now God fits them by such passages of Providence, as these are unto them. By the Cross, he fits them for the Crown. As Joseph by being at first in a state of imprisonment was fitted for a Condition of Government. For these and the like Considerations is suffering to the Children of God, the path and beaten road to Glory which God himself hath in his Wisdom and providence ordered and appointed for them.

This it serves then for *Information* of our Judgements in this particular: that we may understand the Nature of these things, and of Gods *Providences*, and *Dealings* in the world: That we may not altogether dream of ease, and pleasure, and prosperity, and outward jollity, as the Portion of Christians, but rather sometime think of *trouble and affliction*; especially, in that *way and path* that leads to heaven. Our Saviour himself hath told us, *That strait is the gate and narrow, which leads unto Life*, in Mat. 7. 14. And so indeed it is: and there is a *double straitsness* in it. The *one* is in regard of the *Duties*, which *herein* are to be performed by us. And the *other* is in regard of the *troubles*, which *herein* are incident to us. These are such wherewith the way to heaven, is every where *strowed*, and which make the righteous to be *scarcely*, that is, to be *difficultly saved*.

Therefore, those that *undertake Christianity*, and the profession of the true Religion upon them, they must *resolve* on it, and make account of it afore-hand: According to that *Advice* which is *given* them, Luk. 14. 28. *Which of you intending to build a Tower, &c. Or, what King intending to make war, does not first consider of the consequence of either, &c.* Even so it must be also with Christians, in this particular. The want whereof hath been cause why many glorious Professours sometimes have apostatized, and fallen away. As the stony Ground in the Gospel, which in time of trouble and persecution fell away; *And many of Christs Disciples that went back, and went no more with him*, Joh. 6. 66. *Thus is an hard saying*, they cried, *who can bear it?* And the young rich man in the Gospel, that was called to part with his Goods, for Christ: It is said, he went away very sorrowful, because he was *very rich*.

But against *this* may be haply objected, That there are divers of the Children of God, and such as we have cause to hope well of, who yet have a very quiet and comfortable life; wherein they meet with little sorrow, or trouble at all: And how then is this so generally true, whereof we now speak?

To this, I answer, That the Providence of God is very mysterious in this particular, in his different carriage, to different of his Servants here in this Life. And that with some it fareth better than others, in this respect. But yet there are none, but in some *kind* or other, at some *time* or other, in some *sense* or other, have the *Experiment* of this Truth upon them.

Sometimes the Servants of God, are more troubled with *inward conflicts*, than with *outward Afflictions*; and with the *Arrows of the Almighty*, more than with the Frowns of the world: which former, are yet sufficient matter of exercise and Humiliation unto them.

Sometimes again, God afflicts them in *others*, though not immediately in their *own persons*, which yet notwithstanding according as they improve it, proves an affliction unto them. As *Esther* mourning for her People, and Kindred, whiles she was herself in *great Prosperity*. And *Nehemiah*, for his Brethrens Captivity, when himself was in *great Favour*. God sometimes sets home *others* afflictions so effectually upon the hearts of his Servants; as from whence, they do in a manner, and in the issue prove their own. As the Children of great Persons, they are sometimes corrected by *their Proxy*: which yet has that *influence* upon them, as that it is looked upon as a punishment to themselves.

But then further, this is that which all Gods Children do in a manner *pre-*
pare

pare for, and so dispose themselves, as to make account of it: And it is their wisdom so to do. As a man that takes a Journey by Sea, he may chance to Sail, it may be, without Storms, in regard of the event: but yet he expects them, and makes account of them, as incident unto him: And so must Christians, in this Sea of the world. They must suffer at least in a disposition and preparation of mind, whether they suffer or no in the thing it self. This is the Rule which Christ himself hath set, Luk. 14. 27. *who-so-ever doth not bear his Cross and come after me, he cannot be my Disciple.* If any man will be Christs Disciple, he must be willing to take up his Cross, when God shall think fitting to call him thereunto. So much for that. And so of the first Emphasis, which is considerable here in this passage; Namely, that which is Exclusive: *If we suffer, we shall be glorified*, that is, *unless we suffer, we shall not.* There is no coming (in an ordinary way) to Glory, but only by suffering.

Now the Second is that Emphasis which is Inclusive: *If we suffer with him, we shall be also glorified together*, that is, the one it shall certainly follow upon the other. Wherein again, there are two things further considerable: The one is the Conjunction of Conditions; and the other is the conjunction of Persons, in reference to those Conditions. The conjunction of Conditions, is Glory joyn'd with sufferings. The conjunction of Persons, is Believers joyn'd with Christ: and with respect had to these Conditions, being joyn'd with him in suffering, they shall be also joyn'd with him in Glory.

First, Here is the Conjunction of Conditions: Glory joyn'd with suffering. Christians that suffer in this Life, they shall be glorified in the Life to come. This is the constant Doctrine of Scripture. Thus Revel. 2. 10. *Be faithful unto the Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.* 2 Cor. 4. 17. *This light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh to us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of Glory.* Jam. 1. 12. *Blessed is the man that endureth Temptation, for when he is tryed, he shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that Love him.* As before God brings his Children to Glory, he usually calls them to suffering: So after that he hath called them to suffering, he does at last bring them to Glory.

This he does in his infinite wisdom and goodness, and as carrying a special comeliness and congruity with it; as 2 Thes. 1. 6; 7, 8. *Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest: when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty Angels: Where when it is said, that it is a righteous thing with him to do so; we are not to understand it strictly, and in the precise consideration of the word: but in a qualified and mollified acception, as, viz. First, in regard of his Promise: who hereby has made himself a debtor: And so it is righteous with him to perform it. And Secondly, in a suitableness and conveniency of one thing with another; ὡς δίκαιον is here put for ὡς ἰσχυρὸν, Righteous is here put for Equal, or Comely, and which holds best together. As there is a Beauty in all the works, and waies of God besides: so amongst the rest, also in this. Look as those who have had the greatest pleasure and delight in sin, they shall hereafter have the greatest punishment and vexation; as it is said of Babylon: How*
much

much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her, Revel. 18. 7. So again, on the other side : Those who have had the greatest sufferings and afflictions for Christ, they shall, proportionably, have the greatest happiness and Glory with him. *They that sow in Tears, they shall reap in Joy, &c. Psal. 126. 5.*

The Use of this Point to our selves comes to this : Namely, as a great encouragement to Gods Children, against the fear of the Cross, and of those evils which here in this world, (and especially in the course of *Christianity*) are incident unto them ; that they do not from hence faint in their minds. There are three Considerations especially, which are matters of great supportment and satisfaction to Gods Children in suffering : *First*, the Comfort which they have in it. *Secondly*, the Benefit which they have by it. And *Thirdly*, the Glory which they have after it.

First, The Comfort which they have in it. As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our Consolation also aboundeth by Christ. Gods Children have never more embracings and cherishings from him, than at such time as they are under greatest afflictions. As the Mother tends the sick Child especially, and is most fond of that : Even so also, as I may say, is God : Such as those have more inward consolations, and enlargements of Spirit. As we may see by the confession and acknowledgement of many of the *Martyrs*, who in this case have slighted their persecutors, and have triumphed over their Tormentors themselves : Whereas those sometimes who have been at greater liberty, have not known what such things as these meant. Whiles the Disciples had the comfort of Christs corporal presence amongst them, they had not that comfort of his Spirit, which afterwards they enjoyed : And therefore he told them, how it was necessary for them, that that other should be taken away from them, Joh. 16. 6, 7. *Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts ; Nevertheless, I tell you the truth : It is expedient for you, that I go away ; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you : But if I depart, I will send him unto you.* God reserveth the comforts of his Spirit for a time of need, and distrest more especially. This strong drink is given to them that are ready to perish, and this wine to those who are heavy of heart, Prov. 31. 6. None have more of the kisses of Christs mouth ; of the brightness of his Countenance ; of the Songs of the Night, than those of his Servants commonly, that lie under the greatest outward extremities.

Secondly, The Benefit which they have by it, or from it : That is another thing here considerable. *There is no chastening* (saith the Apostle) *which for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous ; Nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them, who are exercised thereby,* Heb. 12. 11. Gods Children they gain by their sufferings, especially in their inward man ; And hence it comes to pass that they conclude it to be good and expedient for them, as David, Psal. 119. 71. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy Statutes.* This is that which the Servants of God mind, and look after in their affliction : And it concerns them to do so, as being the main business, which is regarded by God himself. God does not afflict his Children merely to afflict them, and to exercise his Sovereignty over them : but to do them good by their affliction, and thereby to draw them nearer to himself. *He does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men :* But especially, which are

are his *own* children also. No, but he does it for their profit, that so they may be partakers of his holiness, Heb. 12. 10. And therefore it concerns them to look at this chiefly themselves, in every affliction which is laid upon them: To hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it; and to know that particular Lesson, which he would teach them by it.

Thirdly, *Another In encouragement* is the *Glory* which comes after it. And this is that which is here mentioned in the Text. *Those that have been with Christ in his Tribulations, they shall be with him on his Throne*, Mat. 19. 28. and 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. *Thus is a faithful saying, If we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with him. If we suffer, we shall also reign, &c.* And 2 Cor. 1. 7. *Our hope of you is steadfast, knowing that as ye are partaker of the suffering, so shall ye be also of the Consolation.*

Where still we must observe and remember this, That it is said, *If we suffer with him.* It is not suffering considered indefinitely, or promiscuously that does intitle to *Glory*: but with the due circumstances and limitations of it. First, not meer suffering in a way of common providence, which even a natural man may do. Secondly, not suffering in a way of publick Justice; which an evil man may do. Thirdly, not suffering neither with murmuring, and repining, and impatience, or any other sinister, and inordinate affections whatsoever. There may want glory, as to either of these things. But when we suffer with Christ, that is, from the Strength of Christ; in the Cause of Christ; by the Spirit of Christ; then we are likely to have this following upon it. And yet not *this* neither, *ex opere operato*, from the meer work or action it self, simply considered, as the Papiests fondly teach. As if we should therefore be glorified meerly, because we have suffered, and have undergone so much evil. But we are to take it in the right carriage of our sufferings, and sanctified use and improvement of them. And according to Gods gracious appointment, and ordination. These words here in the Text, are not to be taken by way of Causality, but by way of Order. And so much of the first Particular here considerable; which is the Conjunction of the Conditions: *Glory* joynd with *Suffering*; as belonging unto it.

The Second, Is the Conjunction of the Persons, in reference to these conditions. *Believers* are joynd with Christ; and in particular joynd with him in *Glory*. Here is *συνδοξασθαι* answerable to *συνδοξασθαι*, glorified together with Christ. This is the general Doctrine of Scripture, in sundry places, Col. 3. 4. *When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in Glory.* 1 Joh. 3. 2. *We know that when he appears, we shall be like him.* &c. And 1 Pet. 4. 13. *When his Glory shall be revealed, ye also shall be glad with exceeding joy.*

This Phrase of *together with him*, *συν αὐτῷ*, does imply divers things in it, Three especially: First, *Conformity*. Secondly, *Concomitancy*. Thirdly, *Conveyance*.

First, *Conformity*: *we shall be glorified with him*, that is, we shall be like to him in *Glory*. Thus Joh. 17. 22. *The Glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.* And so Phil. 3. 21. *who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like to his glorious Body, &c.*

Secondly,

Secondly, *Concomitancy*: we shall be glorified with him, that is, we shall be joynted to him, and present with him in Glory. *Joh. 17. 24. Father I will that those whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am. And so shall we ever be with the Lord, 1 Thes. 4. 17.* A concomitancy both of state, and of time: *There and then.*

Thirdly, *Conveyance, or Derivation*: we shall be glorified with him, that is, we shall be glorified from him. His glory shall reflect upon us, and be transmitted to us. We shall shine in his Beams. As the *Members* are glorified from the *head*. Thus in all these respects, shall Believers that suffer with Christ be glorified also together with him. As they take part with him in the one, so they shall also take part with him in the other.

The sum of all comes to this, which is the main scope and drift of the Text: To make good to us the blessed estate and condition of the Children of God, in the midst of the many troubles and afflictions which they are subject unto, here in this world. For, as notwithstanding these, they are *great and rich Heirs*, and so have a *Title to Glory*; as was shewen out of the words before: so moreover, they are at last *possessors* of it, and made actual partakers of it with *Christ himself*, who partakes of it already.

Affliction, it is such a Condition, as is *irksome to flesh and blood*: and we all by Nature are ready to shrink at it, and at the thoughts of it: But *Grace* is much *satisfied about it*. God will at last make all his Children *amends*, for any troubles which here he *laid* upon them. Heaven, it will swallow up all. The comfort which they have in suffering, The benefit which they have by it, And the Glory which they have after it, will be a full *Compensation to them*. So much for that: And likewise for this whole Text; *If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

S E R M O N XXI.

ROMANS 8. 18.

*For I reckon, that the Sufferings of this present time,
are not worthy to be compared to the Glory which shall
be Revealed in us.*

There are no such Comforts again to be found in all the World, as the Comforts of Religion, and Christianity, where they are improved to their utmost advantage: For they are such as are most Real, and Substantial: And they are such also as are Catholical and Universal. They are Comforts that have a Good Foundation: And they are Comforts likewise of a very large Extent, which are able to satisfy us, and to support us in every Condition. And accordingly have the Servants of God been still careful upon all occasions to lay hold on them, and to make use of them to themselves. As we may observe here in this Scripture which we have now before us in the Discourse of the Apostle Paul with these Believing Romans, whom he comforts together with himself under the sense of present suffering, from the Contemplation of Future Glory, as that which would make amends for all the Evils which here in this life they were subject unto.

It follows very pertinently, and seasonably upon the Scripture which was handled by us the last day, as a more particular and distinct unfolding, and explication of it. That which we had there represented under the notion of things Eternal, we have here exhibited under the Term of Glory: And that which we had there represented under the notion of things not seen, we have here exhibited as that which shall at last be revealed: And both that and this to keep and preserve the Children of God from Dejection and Despondency in Affliction. For I reckon, &c.

IN the Text it self there are two General parts considerable, *First, The Proposition, and Secondly, The Apostles Judgement, or Determination about it. The Proposition, that we have in these words: The sufferings of &c. The Apostle Paul's Judgement, or Determination about it; that we have in that word, I reckon, or make account.*

We begin with the First of these parts, viz. The Proposition it self: wherein again we have two Branches more. First, The Subject, or Antecedent: and that is, The sufferings of this present time. Secondly, The Predicate, or Consequent: and that is, That they are not worthy to be compared with the Glory, &c.

N n

First;

First, Of the *Subject* or *Antecedent* : The *sufferings* of *this present time*. By *sufferings* here we are to understand, (as may appear from the *Context*) the *sufferings* of the *servants* of *God* more especially : Those *Afflictions*, which *God* is pleased in *his providence* to lay upon *his own People*. These are the *sufferings* here meant ; The *sufferings* of such *Persons*, as are to be glorified together with *Christ*. And these as they lie here before us in this *present Text*, are to be considered of us especially in reference to the *season* of their *Infliction*, which we have here express'd unto us to be this *present time*. And the *Reference* it is *Mutual*, and *Reciprocal* : Both of the *time* in order to the *sufferings* ; and of the *sufferings* in order to the *time* ; And both of them to be taken notice of by us. If we take the *time* in order to the *sufferings*, so there is this in it, That the *Present time*, it is a *time* of *Affliction*. And so it has in it a sense of *Latitude*. If we take the *sufferings* in order to the *time*, so there is this in it, That *Affliction*, it is but for this *present time*. And so it has in it a sense of *Restriction*, or *peculiar Determination*.

First, To look upon it in the *first Reference*, of the *time* in order to *suffering* ; and so (I say) there is this in it, That the *present time*, it is a *time* of *Affliction*. Where we must first of all explain, what is here meant by *this present time*. Now for this we are to take it of the *time* of *this present Life*. That *time* which *God* does allot to his *Servants* here in this world, it is such a *time* as is *subject* to many *Afflictions* to be endured by them ; In regard whereof these two words may be very properly coupled and joyned together, as they are here in the *Text*, *The sufferings of this present time*. We'll first of all take notice of the *Expression* ; and from thence proceed to the *Notion*. The *Expression* is *this* ; wherein the *state* of this *present world*, is called this *present time*, as it seems here to be. And there are two words of *Emphasis* in it ; the *one* is, in that it is called the *Time* or *season*, ἡ καιρὸς and the other, that it is called the *time* present, ἡ νῦν καιρὸς.

First, The *state* of this world it is express'd by the *time* or *season*, ἡ καιρὸς. And so indeed it is. It is a *Time* of great opportunity, which *God* does afford and vouchsafe unto us, this *time* of our living and abiding here in the world : and upon the point the *only* *time* that we do partake of. When the world shall be no more, *time* shall be no more neither ; there's no *time* properly but *this*, the *present time* ; which is that wherein we have occasion given us for the working out of our *salvation*, and laying hold upon *Eternal life* : the *time* of *life*, it is the *time* of *Grace* ; at least so, as there's no *time* of *Grace* after it, which will supply the defects of it. Those that will be saved hereafter, they must be sanctified now.

And therefore accordingly does it concern us to mind *this time* ; and to be sure to be good husbands of it : not to trifle or squander it away, we care not how, but to have a special regard hereunto. We live not merely to live, but to do good whiles we live, and to be serving of *God* in our several *Generations*, which we should make Conscience to do. *God* has given us this *present world*, that so in it we might provide for a *Better*, and do somewhat as tending and conducing to our future Condition, which should answerably be improved by us. That's the first term of *Emphasis*, The *time*, or *season*.

The *Second* is, that it is called the *present time*, ἡ νῦν καιρὸς, which is to be taken in an *exclusive* sence ; as that which shall not be hereafter. It is *present*, and it is *present* but for a *while*. It has a *Disparagement* of *Transitoriness*

shortness upon it. *The things which are seen are Temporal.* Thus much in brief, of the *Phrase*, or *Expression*, wherein this *present life* is exprest by this *present time*. Now to come to the *Doctrine*, or *Notion* which is here presented to us; and that is, that this *present time*, it is a *time of Affliction*, especially to the servants of God: whilst they live and abide in the world they are lyable to many *Troubles and Crosses*; to the *sufferings* of this *present time*. Thus in *Psal. 34. 19.* *Many are the Afflictions of the righteous.* *Act. 14. 22.* *We must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God.* And *Joh. 16. 33.* *In the world ye shall have Tribulation, &c.*

This God will have thus to be, that so he may wean them from the world, and the love of it, that their hearts may not be inordinately fixed and fastened upon it, but rather breathing after a better condition. God makes it to be a *Time of Affliction*, that he may make it to be a *time of Mortification*, that they may enjoy every thing here with a *qualified* and with a *restrained Affection*, which otherwise they would be apt not to do. This is the reason, that he takes this course with them.

Therefore we should not think *strange of it*, nor be offended and scandalized at it, when at any time we find it to be. For there is a great deal of suitableness, and agreeableness in it, That the *time of life*, it should be a *time of Affliction*. Which makes up to us the *First Reference* which is here considerable of us; to wit of the *Time*, or *Season*, in order to *Suffering*.

The *Second* is of *Suffering in order to the time*. And so there is this in it, That *Affliction* it is *only for a season*. The suffering of this *present time*, that is, as much as this *momentary suffering*: this suffering, which is but of *short continuance*. Thus we shall find the *Scripture* to express it, and to represent it unto us in sundry other places of it, as *1 Cor. 4. 17.* *Affliction for a moment;* ἡ παροῦσα ὁδὸς ὁλβία. *Heb. 10. 37.* *Yet a little while;* ὀλίγον ἔτι χρόνος. *1 Pet. 1. 6.* *Though now for a season if need be ye are in manifold Temptations,* ἡλθον ὑμῖν. And again, *1 Pet. 5. 10.* *After that ye have suffered awhile,* ὀλίγον ἀνέχου. These and the like are the expressions, whereby the shortness and momentaniness of *Affliction* is set forth unto us.

This it serves *First* to put a *Difference* betwixt the *Children of God* and other men. As for wicked and ungodly persons, their sufferings are not only for *time present*, but as well for *time to come*, and for that especially. *Their worm never dyes, and their fire never goes out, and they shall be punished with Everlasting Destruction from the presence of the Lord;* as the *Scripture* informs us. But for *Gods Children*, they are more short and transitory; their *Afflictions*, they last no longer than *their lives*, which when they end, end also with them. To them it is no more but the *suffering of this present time*.

Therefore *Secondly*, It should keep up their hearts from fainting and sinking under them. We know the utmost length and extent of them, which is but of life it self, and therefore not be overmuch dejected. If thou faint in the *Day of Adversity* (says Solomon) *thy strength is but small,* in *Prov. 24. 10.* *Adversity*, it is as it were but for a day, and therefore it is a great piece of weakness to faint under it. *weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the Morning,* *Psal. 30. 6.* We should labour to comfort our selves, and others, with such kind of thoughts as these are. We are ready, when any evil afflicts us, to think that we shall never be rid of it, or freed from it; that it

will alwayes be thus, and that it will never be otherwise: such expressions are apt to come from us. But we see here how the Spirit of God represents these things to us as matters of *short Continuance*: and accordingly we should look upon them, and be affected in the *enduring* of them. And so much may be spoken of the first part of the proposition, which is the Subject, or Antecedent, *The Sufferings, &c.*

The *Second* is the *Predicate*, or Consequent in these words, *Are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in us.* Wherein we have the state of Gods people in the world to come set forth under a three-fold Notion, or Description. *First*, From the *nature* of it: and *Secondly*, From the *Order* of it: and *Thirdly*, From the *Degree* of it.

First, Here's a Description of the *Future state of the Children of God*, from the *nature* of it: And that is of *Glory* to be revealed in them. It is *Glory*, as to the *matter* of it; and it is to be revealed, as to the *Dispensation*.

First, For the *matter* of it, It is *Glory*: He does not only say it is *Rest*, as he does in another place, 2 Thes. 1. 7. *To you who are troubled Rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed.* This is somewhat, and a great satisfaction for Gods people to be freed and set at liberty from their present troubles and afflictions. *Ease* (no more but so) it is very comfortable to those that are in pain. But here is further added by way of *Advantage*, the *Collation of Glory* together with it, which does not only include the other in it, but does further heap somewhat more upon it. *Heaven* it does not only consist in the *Removal of former Evils*, but in the *Addition of further Comforts*. And mark here what this *Comfort* is, for the *Condition and Quality* of it; whiles it is exprest by *Glory*: wherein the *Spirit of God* seems to labour to *satisfie* us and to uphold us against the *scorn and reproach of Affliction*. The sufferings of this *present life*, they are oftentimes attended with some *shame and disgrace*, which is adherent unto them; Oh but now this Consideration of *Glory*, it lessens it, and takes it off. And this is that which has made the *Saints* sometimes to be so patient under it: As *Paul*, 1 Tim. 4. 10. *Therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living of God, who is the Saviour of those especially that believe*: And their Saviour so far forth, as bestowing *Glory* upon them. And again 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I suffer these things, nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have trusted, &c.* And so our blessed Saviour himself for the *Joy*, that is, the *Glory that was set before him, endured the Cross, and despised the shame*, Heb. 12. 2. And so do his members also with him, *looking unto him*.

If here now it shall be further demanded, What *this Glory* we now speak of is, and wherein it consists? We must know that it is such as *eye hath not seen, ear heard; nor entred into the heart of man*. But we may take it for the *General notion* of it in these following *Explications*.

First, In the *Glorious Qualifications*, which both *soul and body* together shall be endued withall. The *Body* raised up to the Excellencies and Perfections of a *Spirit, a Spiritual Body*. And the *soul* endued with a *great measure of Knowledge* in all particulars. And both of them filled with very great and unspeakable Delight in each of their Capacities.

Secondly, In the *Glorious Company and Society*, which we shall there partake of. Of the *Glorious Saints*, and *Angels*: Of *Jesus Christ the Mediator* of

of the New Covenant; our Husband and Head; and Prophet, and Priest, and King; and of God himself in the Trinity of Persons.

Thirdly, In the Glorious Actions, and Performances, which we shall then be employed in: In sitting upon Thrones, Judging the World, even *Angels themselves*: Following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth: and in praising, and magnifying of God to all Eternity.

And finally, In an *Universal Freedom* from whatsoever might cause any annoyance. And this is the *First* thing here considerable, which is the *Matter*; as it is called *Glory*.

Secondly, We may here take notice of the *Dispensation*, as it is said to be such as shall be revealed in us. Whiles it is said, that it *shall be revealed*; there are two things implied in this expression: The one is its *present Secrecy*; and the other is its *future Discovery* or *manifestation*.

First, Its present Secrecy. It shall be revealed: therefore as yet it is hid; and so it is. That Glory which a Christian shall one day partake of in Heaven, it is for the present concealed. Thus in Col. 3. 3. *You are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.* 1 Joh 3. 2. *Beloved, we are now the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, &c.* It is hidden both from men of the world, who have no favour of such things as these are; and it is hidden also from the Saints and Servants of God, who as yet do not fully comprehend them, though they may have some kind of foretastes of them. And God will have it to be so, for the greater exercise and trial of their Faith: To see how far they can be willing, and content to trust God upon his bare Word. This for the *present Secrecy* of it, as implied.

The *Second* is the *future Discovery*, or manifestation, which is here expressed; where we may observe with Chrysostome, That it is not said simply, which shall be, but which shall be revealed. This Glory, which we now speak of, it is in Being at present, and already: It is the Discovery of it only, which is future, and as yet to come. It is already in Being, so far forth as it is prepared for us, as the Scripture assures us. Prepared for us, *First*, in Gods eternal Counsel, and purpose, and decree, Mat. 25. 34. *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world.* Secondly, in the Dispensation of Christ, Joh. 14. 2. *I go to prepare a place for you, &c.* Christ is gone into Heaven afore-hand to prepare a place for all his Members: even a place of Glory. And by entering thereinto, himself has made an entrance, and passage for them. Therefore it is a thing which hath some reality; and is in Being already. But hereafter it shall be discovered and revealed, and made known as much as now it is concealed. Hence 1 Pet. 5. 1. the Apostle Peter styles himself a partaker of the Glory that shall be revealed. And St. Paul, Col. 3. 4. *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with him in Glory.*

This Glory, which for the present is hid, it shall hereafter be revealed, both to the Children of God, and other men. *First*, it shall be revealed to Gods Children for their comfort, and greater reward. God will now at last make them amends for all their long expectations, and dependencies upon him. That which in times of Desertion and Temptation they have thought almost to be quite lost, they shall now have it manifested unto them; and cry out in the words of the Psalmist, *Oh, how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, &c.*

Secondly,

Secondly, To wicked men, it shall be revealed also for their shame and confusion. *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels*; as he will be glorified in his Saints; and admired in all them that believe: so he will likewise be further glorified in the eyes of men of the world: And they in a sort shall behold that glory, which they shall not partake of: *when they shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God, and themselves, in the mean time, kept out*, Luk. 13. 28. Thus this Glory, which is now in a manner concealed, shall be every way made manifest and discovered.

There is *one word* more, which is here considerable of us, before I pass this Head, and that is, the subject of this Glory: *Our selves*, *is ipse*. It is not only to us, but *in* us. Glory may be revealed to a man, which himself has no interest in; in which sense, even Apostates, and Hypocrites are said to have a taste of the powers of the world to come, Heb. 6. 5. But the Glory of Heaven, it is such as shall be revealed *in* us, that is, we shall partake of this Glory, for our own particulars. As many as are true Members of Christ, and by Faith set into him. *Being Vessels of Honour, they shall, consequently, be Vessels of Glory.*

This it holds a proportion to our capacity, and reception of Grace. Look as the Children of God, they do not only *hear of* Grace discoursed of by others, but themselves have also a tincture of it in their own Souls; and therefore St. Paul tells us, *That it pleased God to reveal his Son in him*, Gal. 1. 16. So again, do the same persons, not only see Glory manifested, but even they themselves are the subject of it. It is not only revealed to them, but revealed *in* them. And so much may be spoken of the state of Gods People hereafter in the world to come; according to the first Notion, or Description of it in the Text, which is taken from the Nature of it: For the matter or kind of it, *Glory*; and for the dispensation of it, *Revealed*,

" The *Second* is taken from the Order of it, or Method in which it is dispensed, and that is, in succession to Affliction. Gods Children in regard of that state and condition which happens unto them, have their best still at last. This present time, a time of suffering: The time to come, a time of Glory. And this, it goes before that. Look as it was with Christ himself, even so is it also with the Members of Christ. For Christ himself: we know how it was with him; He suffered, before he reigned. Luk. 24. 26. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and then to enter into his Glory? And so Heb. 2. 10. The Captain of our Salvation, is said to be made perfect through sufferings: even so is it also with us our selves. This was shadowed, and set forth to us in the Miracle of the Marriage at Cana, where Christ reserved the best wine for the last: Even so he does here. Now in this present world, his Children suffer a great deal of Affliction; but hereafter in the world to come, they shall be partakers of a great deal of Comfort and happiness, which shall be conferred upon them. This is also illustrated in the Parable of Dives, and Lazarus; while Dives in his life-time received his good things, and Lazarus evil. From hence was he now comforted, and the other tormented. Gods Children they sow in tears, and they reap in joy, Psal. 126. 5. The Harvest is after the Seed-time. And the same order is observed

observed by the Apostle Peter, to this purpose, 1 Pet. 5. 10. *The God of all Grace, who hath called us to his eternal Glory, by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.*

This is matter of great *incouragement* and consolation to all true *Believers*, in the saddest condition that befalls them. It may be that for the present they may lie under *very grievous Afflictions*. Well, but here is that which may *satisfie* them: That there is the *greater comfort behind*, that waits upon them. *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted*: And *their comfort shall be according to their mourning*. As wicked men, by how much they lived more *deliciously*, so much *torment* shall be the more heaped upon them: So *Godly men*, by how much they have lived more *afflictedly*, so much *comfort, and joy, and Glory* shall they have *added, and increased unto them*. This is the great advantage of a Christian, that as it was said sometime of *Job*, *His latter end, is better than his beginning*; and the longer he continues in *Being*, the further he *proceeds in happiness*. The way of the *righteous, is like the light which shineth more and more to the perfect day*, as it is in *Prov. 4. 18*. He is still *better and better*. And that's the *Second thing*, which is here observable of us, in the Description of this future Estate, to wit, the *Order, or Method of Collation: Glory in succession to Affliction*.

The *Third* is the *Measure, or Degree* of it: And that is, *Glory transcendent to Affliction*. *Present suffering, is incomparable to future happiness*. The greatest Afflictions, which Gods People endure in this world, *are no way to be named with the Glory which shall be revealed in them*. This is the very *scope and drift* of the *Text it self*. For the better and fuller opening of this present Point unto you: there are two things which (with Gods assistance) I shall endeavor to do at this time. *First*, to shew you, that it is so; That *Glory is transcendent to suffering*. *Secondly*, to shew you, *whence* it is so, and in what *particulars* this Transcendency does consist.

First, To shew you, that it is so. There must needs be an *infinite excellency, and transcendency* of Glory above suffering upon this account. *First*, the *Reason and Argument* which God uses and takes from Glory to persuade his Children to suffering. That can by no means be an *Argument*, which is not it self a *Truth*; at least such an *Argument*, as the God of Truth shall vouchsafe to use. Indeed *Satan*, he many times offers and propounds those things for *Incouragements*, which have no substance, or reality in them, but in conclusion fall to the ground, as *false and uncertain*. But the *Lord*, he does not do so. Hee'll make good every *Argument* which he presses for the doing of any Duty. Now, *this is an Argument*, which God uses for *Patience in Afflictions*: The Consideration of *future Glory*. Therefore must this Glory it self be far exceeding, and transcendent above it. The consequence of this Reason is clear: Because that which comforts must be greater than that which troubles, that so it may *take away that trouble*. If Glory shall *comfort* against Affliction: Glory must be *above Affliction*: This will necessarily follow hereupon. Now we shall find God supporting his People in Affliction, from this Argument, in sundry places. Thus in the very Verse before the Text, *If we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified*

rified together. So Rev. 2. 10. *Be faithful unto the Death, and I will give thee the Crown of life.* And Christ tells his Disciples, *That those who have been with him in his Tribulation, they shall sit with him upon the Throne of his Glory*; and many such passages as these.

Secondly, As this may be cleared from *Gods own Arguments*, and reasonings: So also from the Saints apprehensions and improvements of those Arguments. That which the generality of Gods People and Servants do constantly expect, that may we certainly believe: And that which is a supportment to them, may be a settlement to us; and a ground of hope and consolation unto us. The Reason of it is this, Because the principles and constant inclinations of Believers so far forth considered as no other than the workings of the Spirit of God himself in them, who cannot erre. Now, the Saints and Servants of God, they have been continually wrought upon by this Argument: and therefore we are to conceive there is some truth and reality in it. That they have been so, is manifest to us from sundry instances. Thus the Believing Hebrews, *They took joyfully the spoiling of their Goods, knowing in themselves, that they had in Heaven a better and an enduring substance,* Heb. 10. 34. So Moses, *He esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the Treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward,* Heb. 11. 26. And so the Maccabees, *They accepted not deliverance from their tormentings, that they might obtain a better Resurrection,* Heb. 11. 35. Still, the Saints and Servants of God, they have upheld themselves by this Principle, That what ever they have endured in this Life, they should have recompenc'd and made up unto them in the Life to come.

Thirdly, This may be also evinced unto us, even from the Principles of superstition it self. These are also a confirmation, in some sort, of this truth unto us. Religion it needs no other Arguments, than such as may be taken from that, which is opposite and contrary to it. We may see what future Glory is, in regard of present sufferings, from the voluntary sufferings, which many People lay upon themselves. It is that which we may especially observe and take notice of, in the Romish Religion, where for the hope which they have of the meriting, and gaining of Heaven, we know how far some kind of persons have been willing to deny themselves, and to suffer such evils as have not at all been required of them to endure: which does contain this Truth in it, as lying at the bottom, in regard of their Apprehensions, That there is an eminency in Glory to come above present trouble and affliction.

Fourthly, The first-fruits of the Spirit, and the beginnings of Glory here in this present Life, these are an evidence hereof unto us, *If the sufferings of this present time, are not comparable to the Glory, which is present, much less are they to the Glory, which shall be revealed.* Now thus we shall find it to be in frequent observation, and the Testimony of Scripture it self. There are many of the blessed Martyrs, and others of the Servants of God, who have felt that extraordinary ravishment, and joy, and enlargement of Spirit, as that they have scorn'd their cruellest Enemies, and have been loth to have been dismist from that torment, which has been inflicted upon them. The Spirit of God, and of Glory hath rested upon them, as it is in 1 Pet. 4. 16. And again, 1 Pet. 16. 8. The Apostle speaking to afflicted Believers, he tells them that they did greatly rejoyce, notwithstanding their manifold afflictions. And making mention of Christ unto them, he further adds,

1 Pet. 16. 8.

whom having not seen ye love, In whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of Glory, Receiving the end of your faith, &c. Now if it be thus with the first fruits, what may we think of the full vintage? If the Beginnings of Glory be thus glorious, what will be the Perfections and Consummations of it? And if Glory be thus where it is hidden, and in a manner concealed, what will it be then, when it shall be manifested and fully discovered, as it will one day prove to be? And so much may be spoken of the First Head of Illustration, which I propounded, to wit, That it is so, for the thing it self. Glory to come transcendent to present Affliction.

Now further Secondly we are to consider wherein this Disparity, and Eminency and Transcendency does mainly consist, which we may take notice of according to these following Explications of it. First, In weight. Secondly, In Number: and Thirdly, In Duration. Which we have all laid down together in that famous and eminent passage of the Apostle Paul in another place, in 2 Cor. 4. 17. *Our Light Affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh to us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.* Out of which place of Scripture we shall see in the full observation of it a manifest opposition of future Glory to present suffering in all the three particular Branches which have been now named and mentioned by us for the clearing of this Point unto us. First, Afflictions light, Glory weighty. Secondly, Afflictions few, Glory manifold. Thirdly, Afflictions momentary, Glory eternal.

First, Our present Affliction is but light: our Glory to come it shall be weighty. It is *εὐλαβία καὶ δακρύον*. This is one extenuation which is put upon it. Indeed we do not alwayes think it so, but are ready to judge it very heavy, even sometimes the lightest that is; and that none is so heavy as ours. Thus Job of himself, in Cap. 6. 2, 3. *Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the Balances together: For now it would be heavier than the sand of the Sea, &c.* These are the thoughts and apprehensions which we commonly have of our Afflictions, but yet they are here said to be light.

First, To Nature: There hath no Temptation taken you, but such as is common to man, or such as a man is able to endure, *ἀνθρώπινη*, which some translate moderate, in 1 Cor. 10. 13. There are many who by the strength of a meer natural humane spirit, do grapple with many an Affliction.

Secondly, To Conscience, which being troubled for the guilt of sin, is less affected with the sense of smart. Where sin lyes heavy, there Affliction lyes light.

Thirdly, It is also light to Grace, and to an heart which is submitted to it, and has patience given it from God for the sustaining of it. *Leve sit, quod bene fertur onus: Et levius sit patientia, &c.* In all these respects and the like is Affliction said and exprest to be light.

But now on the other side, as for Glory, it is exceeding weighty. It is *ἀδοκίμη*, as it is here presented unto us. And *καὶ ὑπερβαλὺς τὴν ὑπερβολήν*, a transcending and surpassing weight, &c. It is such as is unspeakable: And therefore the Apostle, when he was caught up into the Third Heaven, and so in part made partaker of it, he was said to have heard *ἃ ἄβυσσος ῥημάτων*, to have heard unspeakable words; that is, such words, as though they were spoken to him, yet he was unable to speak them again; and therefore it follows, which it is not possible for a man to utter, 2 Cor. 12. 4. *The sufferings of this present*

sent time, even the greatest sufferings that are, they are in some sort expressible: but the glory which is to come, it is not so, it cannot be uttered. All the Rhetorick or Eloquence in the world, is not able possibly to set it forth; As it is beyond all humane understanding, so it is also beyond all humane Expression. Therefore it is worth our observing in the Text, that it is said expressly, which shall be revealed, ἡ μὲν ἀλλοτρίωσις αὐτῶν • as who should say; That at present it is not, nor cannot be. As the fruition of it is reserv'd; so the expression of it is reserv'd also for another world: And that's the first Disparity of future glory to present suffering; namely, in regard of the weight of it; The Affliction of this present time, light: the glory to come, weighty.

The Second is in regard of number. These Afflictions and Sufferings are but few: The glory which is to come, it is manifold. Afflictions indeed sometimes are said to be many: *Many are the troubles of the Righteous.* But this is spoken comparatively to their present comforts, or to the comforts of others in this life. But if we compare them with the glory that is to be revealed, so they are but few: and the reason of it is this, Because they are such as are limited, and confined. There's no man that has all kind of evils and sufferings whatsoever upon him, though some have more than others. God sets bounds to the Afflictions of his people, as he does to the waters of the Sea. But now for this future glory, it is unmeasurable, and beyond all Limitation. There is no power or faculty of the soul, nor part, or member of the body, but it shall be fill'd and replenish'd with Glory.

Thirdly, For time and duration; I have in part shewed, that already. This present Affliction it is but for a moment, according to the length and protraction of this present life. But the Glory to come, it is such as is Everlasting, and shall abide to all Eternity. we know (says the Apostle Paul) that when our Earthly house of this Tabernacle shall be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. Where it is worth our while to observe, and take notice of the Antithesis or opposition which is there express'd. This a Tabernacle, that an house, or firm building: That an Earthly house, this an house in the Heavens: That a Tabernacle to be dissolved, this an Eternal house. Hence also has it in Scripture such expressions fastened upon it. *An inheritance incorruptible: A City that hath a Foundation, a continuing City: an ever being with the Lord: Immortality, eternal life, pleasures for evermore.* All to signify to us the durability and perpetuity of it. And thus we have seen the Transcendency in all particulars. Now the Consideration of this Point thus opened and enlarged by us may be thus far useful to us. Namely, From hence to comfort us in the worst and saddest conditions that can happen unto us. We should labour to improve such a precious truth as this is to our encouragement upon all occasions. When we are troubled with the thoughts of suffering, let us be comforted with the Meditation of Glory; which we should oppose and set against it, and make it real and certain to our selves, by frequent thoughts and contemplations upon it. Oh we should not suffer any small or petty matter to deject us or cast us down, whiles we have so much comfort to swallow it up.

And further, let us see here the Vanity of Papists in their Doctrine of merit and satisfaction, as if those Afflictions which were suffered by Christians here in this world might deserve from God eternal life to be bestowed upon them.

them. Alas! how can this be, when as there is no proportion between them? And *merit* it still supposes *correspondency*. And so now I have done with the first General Part of the Text, which is the Proposition it self, That the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be, &c.

Now the Second is the Apostles Judgement, or Determination about it; in this word, *I reckon*, or *make account*: The Word in the Greek is λογίζμαι, which signifies properly to reason, or cast up accounts. And so it is a Metaphor either taken from Logick, or from Arithmetick. If we take it from Logick; so it is a drawing of the Conclusion from the premises: If we take it from Arithmetick; so it is by casting up the account to find out the true total sum. We may take it either way, and so apply it to the Apostle's present purpose.

First, Take it from Logick: *I reckon*; that is, *I conclude*; so we find the word used in other places; as in Rom. 3. 28. *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by Faith, &c.* It is the same word which is here in the Text, λογίζομαι. And so there is this in it, That a good Christian has the best and perfectest reason. He makes the Best Conclusions and Determinations of any man else, Psal. 111. 10. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, a good understanding have all they that keep his Commandments, &c.* There's no Logick to this; of the saving of a mans immortal soul.

And therefore let all proud wits stoop, and vail to this. Those that stand so much upon their reason, and sagacity, and intellectual abilities; and despise all others to this purpose in comparison of themselves; let them see here, who are wisest and most intelligent persons of any other; and who do make the most rational Conclusions: Namely, such as are the Children of God, and have the Spirit of God in them to enlighten them, and to lead them into all truth. The wisdom of the world, and the wisdom of the Flesh, it is no more but a piece of Sophistry, and fallacious Argumentation. It is Religion which is the Truest Reason; which does captivate every thought in obedience to Christ. And so much of the word, as it is a Metaphor taken from Logick, *I reckon*, that is, *I reason*.

But Secondly, It may be a Metaphor taken from Arithmetick: *I reckon*, that is, *I make account*. I cast up sufferings on one hand in the nature of expences, and I set down Glory on the other hand in the nature of the receipts; and I find this in the foot of the Account; That the Receipts do exceed the Expences; the present suffering, it comes short of the Future Glory by infinite Degrees. Thus we find the word used, Rom. 6. 11. *Reckon ye also yourselves, &c.* λογίζομαι. And it agrees with that of the Preacher, in Eccles. 7. 27. *Behold thou have I found, (saith the Preacher) counting one by one to find out the account: Achath le-achath, limso chesbbon.* And so there is this in it; That a Christian is the Best Accountant. Especially he is so in this point of Religion, as to the preferring of Glory to Suffering. Thus it was with the Apostle here in this present Scripture.

St. Paul had a very great advantage of many others in this particular. And that in a threefold respect, which is observable of us in him: First, He had skill; and Secondly, He had Experience; and Thirdly, He had Practice.

First, He had Skill: He had a wit, and understanding for this purpose. Every one has not the Art of Arithmetick; especially of this Spiritual Arith-

metick, which is an immediate *infusion from God*; and his *Spirit* enabling hereunto: but *St. Paul* he had it, and he had it from *Him*; he was taught of *God* thus to *reckon*. He that teaches us to count our *dayes*, must teach us also to count our *Conditions*.

Secondly, He had *experience*. He had the *tryal* of *both estates*; and so was best able to judge of *both*: Both of *suffering*, and likewise of *Glory*. Of *suffering*, 2 Cor. 11. 23. *In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, &c.* And of *Glory*, 2 Cor. 12. 4. *When he was caught up into Paradise, and heard, &c.*

Thirdly, He had the advantage also of *Practice*. The expedite casting up of *Accounts*, it is a matter of *use*. And the *facility* is contracted by *custom*. Now *St. Paul* he had this also, he was used hereunto; and he had done it often again and again. As a man that will be *sure* of an *Account*, he goes over it the *second time*, and the *third*: and if it still proves the same, then he determines it, and sets it down for certain: So did the *Apostle* here in this business, He never compared *Suffering with Glory*, but he still found *Glory beyond Suffering*.

Therefore let us heartily embrace and receive this *Truth* which we have now before us: we may try it our selves; and so ought to do as we have occasion for it. But to settle us and to confirm us in it, we may take his *Judgement* about it who has *try'd it for us to our hand*: and here *delivers* in his *tryal of it to us*; so that we may be *assured and confident of it*. Such an expert Accountant as *this was*, so well *versed, and exercised* in the business; and that had so often applied himself to it, out of *question*, he could not possibly *mistake*, or be out and *reckon amiss*. And therefore let us every one be ready to say in our *particular persons*, as the *Apostle* does here in *his*; with which I will conclude, as I began: *I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory, that shall be revealed in us.*

S E R M O N XXII.

ROMANS 8. 19.

For the earnest expectation of the Creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God.

There is nothing more necessary for such Persons, as go about to comfort others in any trouble that is incident to them, than to have a good groundwork, and bottom, and foundation, for that comfort which is administered by them. Otherwise, they will be so far from comforting, as that they will rather so much the more discourage, and come off with the greater disparagement, and disadvantage. Therefore the Apostle Paul, in the verse immediately preceeding, having endeavoured to comfort the Romans, and in them all other Christians, in their present sufferings, from the consideration of future Glory; he does here in this part of the Chapter, which we have now before us, endeavour to make good and confirm this Glory to them, in the truth and certainty of it. And he does it by a double Argument, which is used by him in this particular. The first is from the expectation of the Creature in the instincts of Nature. And the second is from the expectations of the New Creature, in the principles of Grace. The former, we have laid down in the nineteenth Verse, and so forward to the twenty third. The latter, we have laid down in the twenty third Verse, and so forward to the thirty first.

Our business, at the present, with Gods assistance, is with the First of these Arguments, in Verse 19. For the earnest expectation of the Creature waiteth, &c.

FOR our better proceeding in this Verse, which we have now before us, it is requisite we should explain the words, or terms which are here exhibited to us: what may be the sense and meaning of them: because they seem to carry some kind of difficulty in them. And they are threefold. First, the Creature. Secondly, the earnest expectation of the Creature. Thirdly, the manifestation of the Sons of God; what is meant by each of these.

First, *The Creature.* This is to be taken not in a limited sense, as sometimes it is taken in other places, for the *Humane reasonable Creature*, that is, for mankind, Mark 16. 16. but in an *extended sense*: For all these outward and visible things which are in the world besides our selves: The Heavens, and the Earth, and the Sea, and all that is in them. The whole frame and Body of the Creation; as the Original word carries it here in the

Text;

Text, *ἡ κτίσις*, *The Creation it self*. And so the Syriack, and Arabick Interpreters Translate it *every Creature*, or the *whole Creation*.

The *Second* thing is, *the earnest expectation of the Creature waiting*: What may be understood by *this*? This, at the first hearing, seems to contain some *harshness* in it; especially in our *English Tongue*; but the sense of it may be very easily resolved: And that *thus*, *The earnest expectation of the Creature waiteth*, that is, *the Creature waiteth with earnest expectation*. The word which is here translated *Earnest expectation*, is in the *Greek* very *Emphatical*, *ἐκκατάβασιν*, which signifies properly the stretching or putting out of the head with *vehement intention*, as one that looks out for some *special friend*, which he *expects* and *desires* should come unto him. According to that which is express'd of the Mother of *Sisera*, waiting for the return of her Son, *Judg. 5. 28.* *She looked out at the window for him; and cryed through the Lattice: Even so also in a sense here.*

Now in the *Third* place by the manifestation of the *Sons of God*, *ἡ ἀποκάλυψις τῶν υἱῶν*, &c. We are to understand the *Day of Christs second coming*: as the proper time and season, wherein the *Sons of God* shall be made manifest. The words being thus opened and explained, we may for our better handling of them observe two parts in them. First, the *Party expecting*. And *Secondly*, the *Thing expected*. The *Party expecting*, is the *Creature*; which is here by a *Prosopopeia* express'd as a *Rational Person*; and as indued with *Understanding and will*. The *Creature waits and earnestly expects*. The *Thing expected*, is the *Accomplishment and Consummation of the Saints: The manifestation of the Sons of God.*

We begin first of all with the first of these Parts, *viz. The Party expecting*: The *Creature*. It is usual with the *Spirit of God in Scripture* to fasten upon the *unreasonable Creatures*, those expressions which do properly belong to *reasonable men*. As for example, *Psal. 96. 11.* *Let the Heavens rejoyce; let the Earth be glad; let the Field be joyful: and all that is therein.* So *Psal. 98. 7, 8.* *Let the Sea roar, &c. Let the Floods clap their hands, and let the Hills be joyful together.* Again *Hab. 2. 11.* *The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.* *Gen. 4. 10.* *The voice of Abels blood is said to cry. And the hire of the Labourer to cry,* *Jam. 5. 4.* And so here now the *Creature to expect*, and to wait earnestly: This for the expression. Now the *Point*, which we may take notice of from it, is briefly this: That the *whole course and frame of the Creation* is so ordered and disposed of by God, as that it carries in it a *vehement desire*, and *longing*, and *waiting* for the *future estate and condition of Gods Children* in another world, *The earnest expectation of the Creature waiteth*: This is the *Point* now before us.

There are *three* things in this passage, which are ascribed to the *Creature*, which are accordingly observable of us: One is *expectation or looking*. Another is *desire or longing*. The third is *carrying, or enduring*. The *Creature looks* for this season: and the *Creature longs* for this season: and the *Creature stays* for this season. There is *each* of these in it. There's *Expectation, Desire, and Patience.*

First, I say, it *expects* or looks for it, *ἐκκατάβασιν*. We may take notice of that. Which we must still understand, as spoken *Metaphorically*, and by way of resemblance; not as if the dumb *Creature* did properly put forth such an act as this is: But, forasmuch as it is in such a state and condition as those persons commonly

commonly are, which do at any time look for any thing : therefore is this *Act of Looking*, and expecting, attributed unto them, as proceeding from them. What state, or condition is *that*? we may take it in *two* particulars: *First*, a state of *Imperfection*. And *Secondly*, a state of *Motion*. The Creature is in a *defective* condition, and so expects to be *perfected*: And the Creature is in an *uncertain* condition, and so expects to be settled.

First, It is in a state of *Defectiveness*, and so looks to be *supplied*. This is that which the Scripture does sometimes fasten upon it, as *Ecc. 1. 15.* *That which is crooked cannot be made straight; and that which is wanting, cannot be numbered.* The Creature hath lost very much of that *beauty*, and *vigour*, and *strength* which it had in its *first beginning*, and which God at *first* did bestow upon it. Now therefore in this respect does it *wait* for the *second coming of Christ*, which is the time of the *restitution of all things*, as it is called, *Act. 3. 21.* *The time of the restitution of all things*, that is, when all things shall be renewed, and restored to that *first and Primitive excellency*, which in their *Creation* was put upon them. The present *imperfection of the Creature* shews that it *waits* for such a time as *this* is, because every defect calls for some kind of *supply*, and making of it up.

Secondly, It is in a state of *Motion*, and so looks to be *fixed*. When we see a *Man going up and down*, and *running from one place to another*, now in *this corner*, and then in *that*: and afterwards again in *another*: and never at *rest*, we conclude, that certainly there is somewhat which he *looks after*, that he has not yet obtained: Even so is it also here with the *Creatures*. When we look upon them, we shall observe, what a great deal of *uncertainty* there is in them; how full of *Motion and Variety* they are, and never abiding in one fixed condition. As it is in *Ecc. 1. 4, &c.* *One Generation passeth, and another Generation cometh, &c.* *The Sun also riseth, and the Sun goeth down, and hasteth to the place where he arose. The Wind goeth towards the South, and turneth about to the North, it whirleth about continually, &c.* Thus we see how the Creature is exprest under a *great deal of inconstancy*. Which shews that it hath not yet attained to its *consistent condition*, which it expects to come unto. As the *Needle in the Mariners Compass*, which is touched with the *Loadstone*, it's never quiet, but *hovers up and down* till it be fastened upon the *North*, which is the place of its *proper rest*. And that is the *first thing* here considerable in this passage, to wit, the *Creatures looking* for this time of the manifestation of Gods Children; as that which it supposes will be.

The *Second* is the *Creatures longing* for the time of this manifestation also, as that which it desires may be. This is also signified in the Text, in this *earnest expectation*: which does not only denote a *meer wishing or velleity* (as they call it) but an *express desire*, and *vehement seeking*. It has a *servent, and impetuous, and unsatiable desire after it*: Which again, is not to be taken *properly and formally*, no more than the *other of expectation*: but still in a *borrowed signification*, and by way of *similitude*. As to express it, and to set it forth by other things. When we see the *Earth* sometimes to be *chop'd and dryed*; we say, it *thirsts and longs for rain*; not that it has *such desires in it*, which we our selves are capable of, but because it is in *such a condition* as does occasion such desires in us. So when we say that the Creature *longs*, we must not take it in the *literal* signification, but in the *Metaphorical*:
Namely,

Namely, as so *qualified* at present, as persons are, who have a *longing desire*, that is, there is a *vehement inclination* in the Creature to a *future change*. It is not *satisfied with its present condition*, but *desires* to be a great deal *better*, and to be *restored to that first condition*, which before the *fall of man* it was *put into*. It *earnestly longs* for the *manifestation of the Sons of God* in another world.

But why, or whence (may some say) does it *come to do so*? What has the Creature to do with *that*? The *dumb and unreasonable Creature*, with the glorious perfection of the *Saints*? Yes, it is *very much concern'd* in it: and that upon a *threefold account*: *First*, by way of *sympathy* and correspondence of affection to us: as *rejoycing in our good*. And *Secondly*, by way of natural propensity, and respect, and affection to it self: as to its own perfection, and accomplishment. *Thirdly*, for the greater Honour and Glory of God himself, which is involved in it. Each of these are considerable

First, (I say) by way of *sympathy*, and suitableness of affection to us: as in some sort *delighting*, and *rejoycing* in the good of Gods People; for as the Creatures were *made for us*, so they do in some manner take *part with us*, for whom they were made: and have *impressions* upon themselves answerable to those things, which happen unto us. When we are *sad*, they are *sad* likewise: When we *rejoyce*, they *rejoyce* also: And accordingly we shall sometimes meet with expressions to this purpose in Scripture, As the *Suns* being turned in *darkness*; and the *Moon* into *blood*: The *Heavens* *singing*; The *Earth* *rejoycing*; The *Fir-trees* *howling*; The *Ground* *mourning*, and so of the rest: All to shew thus much unto us, That the Creature hath some sympathy with us in *such things as befall us*: And amongst the rest, especially in this, For the *Perfection*, and *Consummation of our Happiness*. But,

Secondly, And further, Out of respect to it self, for its own *Consummation* likewise. Therefore it is that the Creature does so much long for the *Consummation of Gods Children*, because in the *Perfection of them*, it self shall be *perfected*. For God in his Wisdom, and Providence, hath so ordered and disposed of things, That the *good of his own Children* shall be the *good of every thing else*: That nothing shall be perfectly happy, and compleat without them; whereby he might make them so much the *dearer*, and more desirable to the rest of the world. Hence it is that the Creature does so look and long for their *Manifestation*. This is that which we have intimated in the 21 Verse of this Chapter, which in its place we shall further speak of, and therefore will not now *insist* on, Because the Creature it self also shall be *delivered from the Bondage of corruption*, into the glorious liberty of the *Children of God*.

Thirdly, Out of respect to the Honour and Glory of God himself, which is concern'd in it. As all Creatures were made for Gods glory, as the *End of their Creation*: so there are put into them such principles, as do lead them, and carry to this *End* whereto they are *ordained*. And so here, amongst the rest, in this particular, whereof we now speak. And that's the *Second* thing here also, to wit, The Creatures *longing*, as that which it *desires* may be.

The *Third* is the Creatures *tarrying*, or *staying*: as that which it is content with till it be. The Creature, although for the present, under manifold evils and inconveniencies, which it is *incompassed withal*, from the state and

and condition which it is in; yet notwithstanding is in some sense *patient* under this condition, till the time which God has appointed for the freeing and releasing of it, from it. Though it *groans*, yet it does not *complain*; but keeps within its own bounds and limits for all that. All the *Creatures*, they still keep their course: They are not fullen, but do that work which is proper to them. And that in the midst of all those *injuries*, and *indignities* which are offered unto them. There is no *Creature* whatsoever, which we can name, but wicked men do commonly abuse it, and pervert it to another end, than for which it was appointed. To *Luxury*, to *Intemperance*, to *Violence*, to all kind of *mischief*. And for a while, the *Creature* must be content to submit hereunto. And so it is: It suffers a great deal of *disparagement*, and *debasement* in this particular; for which, those who are guilty of it, will one day be deeply accountable to the *Common and general Creator*. God will, one day, most severely *avenge* all the *wrong* which has been done to his *Creatures*, in any kind, or particular whatsoever; and so much the rather, as themselves do so *patiently endure it*, in not speedy *dispatching* of those who are herein *obnoxious*, but waiting the time appointed for it.

There is not only the *Patience of the Saints*, which the Scripture speaks of sometimes as *remarkable*: but also the *patience* (in their kind) of *other Creatures*, which is to be taken in with it. From whence, though as yet, they have not attained their *ultimate perfection*, yet they are willing, as yet, to be without it, and to stay for the *season of the restitution of all things*. And all, because it is the *will of God*, that it should be so with them. And thus have we seen this *Passage* made good in this Particular, In *Looking*, In *Longing*, In *Staying*.

Now the *Use* of all to our selves, comes to this: *First*, as a *shame and reproach* to all carnal and worldly persons. We see here how far they are *inferiour* and below the very *Creatures* themselves. Those, which are below them in regard of *Creation*, yet they are above them in regard of *Affection*, whiles they have not so much in them as is observable in the common frame of *Heaven and Earth*. These look and long for the *second Coming* and *Appearance of Christ*, which the others do not. *Wicked*, and *ungodly* people they do not love to think of such a time as *this is*. And therefore are said to put away far from them the *evil day*, in *Amos* 6. 3. Either in that they think not of it at all; or when they chance to think of it, yet think of it as a thing which is *remote*, and a great way off, and which they *desire* still should be so. When the Lord does at any time *summon* them, as sometimes he does, by seizing upon their *Consciences*, they cry out as the *Devils* in the Gospel, *why art thou come to torment us before our time?* As *Thieves* and imprisoned *Malefactors*, they do not wish for the *coming of the Judge*, who comes to their *woe and punishment*.

Yea, further, there is a *deep sottishness*, and *presumption*, and *security* upon them: from whence they will not see him to be coming, though he be even just before the door: but scoff and mock at it, as a thing which there is no likelihood or probability for; according to that of the Apostle, *2 Pet. 3. 4. Scoffers walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? The day of the Lord, to such persons, comes as a Thief in the night, that is, suddenly and unexpectedly, 1 Thes. 5. 2.*

Now herein, I say, they are convinced and shamed even by the *Creatures*

themselves. That these by a *meer natural instinct*, should have some kind of *pre-apprehension* of that *future estate and condition*, which those others do not take notice of, or at all regard. As God has put into the Creatures a knowledge of their *own* appointed times for coming: so of *his* appointed time also: which *men* sometimes have not: According to that of the Prophet, Jer. 8. 7.

Secondly, This serves to *strengthen and confirm* the Faith of *Christians* themselves. If the *Creature* doth thus wait for the Time of the *second coming of Christ*; why then certainly such a thing as this there is to be expected and look'd for by us. Forasmuch as this is put into them by God himself: And though *themselves* are *uncapable* of these acts of reason and reflexion; yet they are acted and led herein by him, who does fully understand them. *Opus Creaturae est opus Intelligentiae*: The work and desire of the Creature, is here the work of the highest intelligence. These natural propensities do conclude in them the reality of that object whereunto they are directed. And accordingly we should improve them to this purpose, for our further belief, and confirmation. There is a double Use of the Creatures, wherein they are *advantageous* to us: The one is to supply our necessities; and the other is to *further our Graces*; and it concerns us to make use of them to each. The Heavens not only to gaze upon them, but to gain instruction from them. And the Earth not only to feed us, but also to teach us: And a gracious and spiritual heart will be careful accordingly to improve it, and to make this use of it. This is in part the very scope and drift of the Text it self, where the Apostle, to prove that there is such a thing as the manifestation of Gods Children, instances in the expectation of the Creature.

Thirdly, Here is an Argument also for *Patience* under present sufferings, in hope of future deliverance, from this disposition of the Creatures: This is another thing also intended in the Text, as may appear from the coherence of it. The sufferings of this present life, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the Creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God. As who should say; Whiles the Creatures are patient in their condition, as making account to be one day freed from it, how much more should we be so in ours? and do that from the principles of Piety, which they do only from the Instincts of Nature? Thus God sends us to School to the Creatures for the instructing and ordering of us: Partly to humble and shame us: And partly also to condescend to us, and to teach us by such kind of waies, as we are most familiarly acquainted withal, and that lie even before us. As the Apostle James to the like purpose, Behold, the Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the Earth, and hath long patience for it; Be ye also patient, stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, Jam. 5. 7.

The sum of all comes to this: All the Creatures wait for their perfection: and why should not we? No Creature does as yet attain its End: why should we seek for happiness here below? All the Creatures endure the injuries of wicked people in the abuse of them: why should not we be patient under them. All the Creatures own us as their Governours: why should not we own the Lord of all? All the Creatures submit to Gods will in the present state in which they are: why should not we do so also? And so now I have done with the First General Part of the Text, which is the Party expecting,

expecting, in these words, The earnest expectation of the Creature waiteth.

The *Second* is the thing *expected* in these: *The manifestation of the Sons of God*, that is, by taking it *passively*; the *time* when as the *Sons of God* shall be manifested. The *Point*, which we may here chiefly observe, and take notice of, is this, That there is such a *Time* indeed a coming as this is; when *God's Children* shall fully appear and be made manifest. Thus *Col. 3. 2.* *when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with him in Glory.* And *1 Joh. 3. 2.* *Beloved, we are now the Sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. we shall be like him; that is, in appearing as He does appear.*

For the better opening and handling of this present *Point* before us, we must know, that the *Manifestation* of *Gods Children* is considerable in a *threefold distribution*. *First, In their Persons. Secondly, In their Actions. And Thirdly, In their Conditions: they shall be manifested (hereafter) in all these.*

First, As to their Persons. They shall be revealed, and manifested here; who are so, and who are not. Here in this present world there is a mixture of one with another; of tares and wheat together; but then there shall be a plain separation and distinction of either. And as the Lord himself knoweth who are his, *2 Tim. 2. 19.* so he shall make others to know it also. As it is in *Matth. 13. 42, 43.* *The tares shall be gathered into bundles, and cast into the furnace of fire. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.* And so *Matth. 25. 32, 33.* speaking of the last Judgement; It is said that *Christ* shall gather all Nations, and shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, &c. Though tares and wheat grow in one field; and though sheep and goats lie in one fold; yet there shall be a distinction and separation of them one from the other. According to that of the Prophet, *Malach. 3. 16, 17, 18.* *A book of remembrances was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name: And they shall be mine saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day, when I shall make up my Jewels, &c. Then shall ye return and discern betwixt the righteous and the wicked; betwixt him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. God will put a difference betwixt his Jewels and other stones.*

There's a *threefold Manifestation* of *Gods Children* again, in reference to their *Persons*. *First, A Manifestation of them to themselves. Secondly, A Manifestation of them to one another. Thirdly, To wicked men.*

First of all, to themselves. This they are in part already even here in this present life, by the witness of *Gods Spirit* in their hearts, clearing to them their state in Grace; but this, it does oftentimes meet with many doubtings together with it, which are added to it; Yea but hereafter there shall be none of these shadowings or overhiding of them, but they shall appear what they are to themselves.

Secondly, Gods Children, they shall be hereafter also manifested to one another. And this again in a double respect. *First, As such gracious and Holy persons considered in General. Secondly, As these Gracious and Holy Persons considered in Particular.*

First, Take it in General. They shall be manifested to one another thus. Here whiles we live in the world, there is oftentimes a great disappearance of Gods Children in this behalf, and there are very hard censures and mis-constructions, which do pass between them. Those who perhaps are good themselves, they have not alwayes so good an opinion of others as good as themselves, and sometimes better. From whence there arises much inconvenience and the neglect of the mutual good one of another. Partly through humane weakness, and infirmity, and partly from Satans joyning and making advantage of mens corruption. Well, but there will a time come when they will be better known one to another. Those who have been carried by the same gracious and holy Principles for the main, shall then be forced to own those, who in other matters have been different from them, whose Grace, and Faithfulness, and Integrity shall be then manifested to them. This was that whereby the Apostle Paul did comfort and encourage himself against the unjust and uncharitable censures of some persons in the Church of Corinth, 1 Cor. 4. 5. *Therefore judge nothing before the time, till the Lord himself come; who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart, and then shall every one have praise of God.* And accordingly it should prevail with Christians to this purpose to prevent such uncharitableness in them towards one another, when they shall consider these things with themselves. Sometimes it pleases God to manifest his Children to one another in their Consciences here, as St. Paul else-where speaks of himself, *we are manifest to your Consciences*, that is, you in your own hearts and spirits cannot but bear witness unto us. But if they are not manifest here to their Consciences, they shall hereafter be manifested to their Faces, and all that see them shall acknowledge them to be the People whom the Lord has chosen. And this for the Manifestation of their Persons considered in General.

Now farther *Secondly, Take it also in Particular*, and there may be Truth in it so likewise. Gods Children when they come there shall be manifested, and known to one another, as such and such Persons. This we do not deliver peremptorily and dogmatically as an Article of Faith, but problematically and conjecturally as a decent and probable Truth, and the General Opinion of the Best, and most Judicious Divines, both Modern and Ancient. And there are divers things making for it. It is that which is in a manner intimated in the Transfiguration of Christ upon the Mount, where the three Disciples in Tabor knew the Persons of Moses and Elias appearing unto them, whom yet they had never seen before. Now that which was done but in the representation of Heaven is not to be denied to Heaven it self. If they knew those persons, we may as well know them hereafter; and also many others with them. Yea we hear how Drives in Hell is said to know Abraham, and Lazarus in Heaven: And what is agreeable to the condition of the damned, is not to be denied to those which are glorified. Then there shall be converse with one another in Heaven, and therefore knowledge; and the Angels they there know one another, and therefore why not the Saints? Besides, whatever may make for the greater joy and comfort of the Saints, and may increase their future happiness, it shall not be denied unto them, which is that which this does. Indeed the Greatest Joy and comfort of all lyes in the perfect and full knowledge or fruition of God and Christ; yet this is considerable as accessory, the knowledge one of another. As a Minister to see his

his people glorified; the Apostle makes it a matter of rejoicing at the coming of the Lord; therefore he shall see it at that coming, *1 Thes. 2. 19.* And so for a Father to see his glorified Child, it will be a rejoicing likewise: This was that which comforted David in the Death of his Son, That he should go unto him; which is not to be understood only of the state of death, but of the state of Glory: And going to him not only in common as to another Saint (for then he had not had thus much of comfort in it) but in this property, and Relation. Indeed we must add this by way of further explication, That this knowledge it shall not be after a carnal or earthly manner, but rather spiritual and Heavenly; but as for the thing it self, that it shall be after some sort, is very likely and probable. And thus is there a manifestation of the Sons of God one to another.

Thirdly, They shall be then manifested also to wicked men, and men of the world. Those, who have formerly despised them, shall now acknowledge them; yea even also admire them. They shall cry as the Spirit of Divination did in the Acts, *These are the servants of the most high God.* As it is exprest to us at large in the Book of wisdom, cap. 5. 1, &c. Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours; when they see it they shall be troubled with fear and be amazed at the strangeness of his salvation: And repenting shall say within themselves, *This was he whom we had sometimes in derision, &c.* when Christ shall come, he will then be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe, in that day: as it is *2 Thes. 1. 10.* And that also to the great horror and astonishment of the wicked; when they shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven, and themselves shut out, *Luk. 13. 28.* Thus shall there be a manifestation of the Children of God in their Persons, which is the first Explication.

Secondly, In their Actions. They shall be manifested in these likewise: Every mans work shall be made manifest (of what nature it is) for the Day shall declare it, *1 Cor. 3. 13.* As the Lord knows their works himself, so he will cause others to know them also. God shall bring every work unto Judgement, and every secret thing, whether it be good or evil.

This it teaches us First of all Accurateness and exactness in those things, which are done by us. Because our works shall one day be discovered and published, and brought to light, we should so order it, that we may not be ashamed before God and his holy Angels, &c.

And Secondly, It is also an Incouragement to us in secret goodness and the present concealment of worth, or questioning of it. There are many good people in the world, which sometimes do a great deal of good in it, and yet it is not taken notice of nor regarded, nor themselves for it: Well, but there will a time come when as they shall be sufficiently made known and manifest. Their works shall follow them. Those which are hid den now shall then be discovered; and those which are suspected now, shall then be cleared; and those which are censured now shall then be approved.

And so as for the Actions, which men do; so also the Cause and Interest, which they own; they shall be manifested here also. There's a double party and side in the world, God's and Satan's: Christ's and Antichrist's: Michael and his Angels, and the Dragon and his. Now it shall one day be manifested, who has taken the better part, and owned the juster cause, and been on the strongest side: when the Lord shall ask, as Jehu once did, *who is on my side?*

side? who? 2 King. 9. 32. Then shall those who are the *Servants of God*, to this purpose be made known. *You* (says Christ to his Disciple) *who have followed me* (and owned me) *here in the regeneration* (that is, in the Resurrection) *when the Son of man shall sit on the Throne of his glory*, then shall you be declared to be what you have been; by sitting on the same throne with him.

As Christ will then be sure to manifest and discover all his enemies, and those that would not that he should reign over them, and will trample them under his feet: so he will be then sure also to discover all his friends, and those who have served him and stood for him; and will put the highest expressions of love, and respect upon them, that possibly may be. Gods Children shall be manifest in their *Action*.

Thirdly and lastly, In their Condition. They shall be manifested so also. And that especially, as a condition of *Glory*. This is that which suites more immediately with the Coherence of the Text: The Apostle in the verse preceding had spoken concerning the glory which shall be revealed in us; now in this he subjoynes the manifestation of the Sons of God, that is, the manifestation of the glory of such Persons, as are his sons and daughters. And so indeed I find the Arabick Interpreter to carry it; who puts the word *Glory* into the Text, and reads the words of this Verse thus, *The earnest expectation of the Creature, waiteth for the manifestation of the Glory of the Sons of God*, as that which is chiefly aimed at and intended in it, as no question but it is. The *Glory* and Lustre of the Saints, it shall one day be made manifest and conspicuous. It is for the present an hidden glory, as their wisdom also is an hidden wisdom: but then it shall be opened and discovered; and glory itself shall become glorious: They shall all then with open face beholding the glory of the Lord be changed into the same image from glory unto glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. 3. 18. They shall appear with him in glory, Col. 3. 4.

The Consideration of all these things laid together, That there is such a time to come, wherein the Children of God shall be made manifest; and withal that the Creature it self does earnestly hope and wait for this time, when it shall be so indeed: it should have this Practicall Influence upon us, even to raise our hearts and affections to it. It was the commendation given to old Simeon, that he waited for the Consolation of Israel. And to Joseph of Arimathea, that he waited for the Kingdom of God. Now if they so waited for Christs first coming, how much more should we for his second, especially having such an example as this is, propounded to us in the Creatures? If they wait for our manifestation, how much more should we wait for our own. If they wait for it, who are concern'd in it but occasionally and collaterally, how much more should we wait for it, who are concerned in it immediately and directly? Surely it must needs argue a great deal of weakness and perverseness in us, when 'tis otherwise with us. Therefore let us stir up, and provoke our selves to such a business as this is. Looking for, and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, as it is in 2 Pet. 3. 12. To see that we come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus, 1 Cor. 1. 7. We should look for it, as that which will be, and long for it, as that which is best to be.

This is the Temper and Disposition of the Spouse of Christ; as we have it exprest unto us, in Revel. 22. 17. *The Spirit and the Bride say Come: And*

we should say *Come also, Even come Lord Jesus, come quickly*, as it is in the twentieth verse of the same Ch. *2 Tim. 4. 8.* There are *divers and sundry considerations*, which do serve to move us hereto: The manifold *Afflictions* of the world, and Calamities, which *daily threaten us*: The manifold *corruptions* of the world, and *temptations* which *daily encompass us*: The *great abounding and overflowing of sin*, and *decay and declining of Religion*. All which did never more meet than in this present Age in which we live; And should serve as motives to us to carry us to this Heavenly disposition.

And more particularly, which seems to be hinted, and intimated in the very *Text itself*; The consideration of that *Blessed Estate*, which is consequent and following hereupon, when as all the Saints and Servants of God shall meet together, *one with another*, and that in the sweetest conjunction of hearts and minds that possibly may be. The Apostle does not here call it the time of the *General Resurrection* and of *Christs second coming*, though that was that which he meant by it: but the time of the *manifestation of Gods Children*, as which might more affectionately work upon them. Therefore let us cherish such Desires as these in our selves all that may be. It is that which is most suitable and agreeable to a *Christian frame*; and it is never with us so as it should be, till we have attained hereunto: *Even to desire and wait and long for the second coming of Christ*, and the *Glorious manifestation of Gods Children*. It is that which we do in part pray for in the *Lords Prayer*, if we understand our selves what we do in it, when we say, *Thy Kingdom come*, that is, *Thy Kingdom of Grace* in this world, in the work of the *New-Creature*; and *thy Kingdom of Glory* in the world to come, in the *Accomplishment of all Happiness and Bliss*.

To help us hereunto, let us take in these *Directions* with us. *First*, Be well settled in our *Judgements*, that there is such a state indeed as this is. For that which we do not believe, we cannot desire. If we do not think that there is a state of *future Glory*, and blessedness, which does await *Gods Children*, we cannot our selves wish or expect, or wait for that state. This is therefore to be laid for a *Foundation*.

Secondly, Let us be much in the *thoughts and meditations* of it. *Contemplation* it raises *Affection*: We see how it does so in other things, and how much more then in this? When we shall view and ponder upon these things, in their *full latitude*, and *extent*, and *inlargement*, it will wonderfully set us agog in this particular, and work us to an earnest expectation of this *glorious Condition*. As an heir when he thinks what he is born to; it makes him long till he is come to age. *Apprehension of Excellency* is a great provocation to *Desire*.

Thirdly, Let us get our hearts weaned and taken off from the world and the things of it: so long as we do any thing more than ordinary admire earth, we cannot very much desire Heaven. The worse in such a case as this, will make us to neglect the better. But when we are once *Crucified to the world*, and the world to us; then Heaven will better relish with us; and we shall the more aspire and breath after an heavenly condition: when our *Affections* are first taken off from things on earth, they will then be set on things above.

Fourthly, Let us labour to be purged and freed from sin, both as to the *guilt* of it, and also to the *power* of it. To the *guilt* of it, as having our persons reconciled to God in *Christ*: we can never be willing to meet Christ, till we be

be found in Christ. Those which are in a state of *Enmity*, they are in a state of *fear*, but those who are *justified* have peace with God, and so rejoice in *hope of the glory of God*, Rom. 5. 1. And then as to the *power of sin*, labour to have that *subdued* in us likewise; *He hath made us meet to be partakers*, &c. *Coloss. 1. 12.* And he that hath this hope in him, *purifies himself*.

And lastly, To all the rest add *Fruitfulness and Activity in Goodness*. Those who are much in *arrears*, they do not care to come to an *account*. And so it is *here*: As long as men have their *work* to be done, it must needs be *irksome* and tedious to them to think of *Christ's second Coming*; but when they can say with *St. Paul*, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course*, &c. then they will be able to say with him also, *Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, &c.*

S E R M O N XXIII.

ROMANS 8. 20.

For the Creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.

There are two Considerations especially, which do lay a ground and foundation to any Persons for their desire, and earnest expectation of any thing, which is apprehended by them, Advantage and Probability. The advantage of having it, and the probability of getting it. Where the thing is possible or likely to be had, but not worth the having, it cools the desire after it: And where the thing is in it self desirable, but impossible to be come by, it takes off the expectations of it: But where these two do happily concur and meet together in one, for the occasion, the two other follow in the effect. And this is that which is observable of us in this Verse which we have now before us, in conjunction with that which was handled by us the last day, as to the propensity and inclinations of the Creature, towards a future state of liberty, as belonging unto it. There we had its desire and expectation simply propounded in the thing it self, The earnest expectation of the Creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God. And here now we have an account of the Ground and Reason of such a thing as that is, taken both from self-interest, and likelihood: For the Creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope. Because it was at present under subjection, therefore it desired to be freed: And because there was hope for its freedom, therefore it expected to be freed. There was a fit connexion of both together.

IN the Verse it self there are two General Parts considerable: First, the Creatures Condition. Secondly, the Cause, or Occasion of this condition to the Creature. The Creatures condition, that is express in these words, *The Creature was made subject to vanity.* The Cause, or occasion of this condition, this is laid down two manner of waies: First, Negatively: Not willingly, or of its own accord. Secondly, Affirmatively: But by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.

We begin with the First of these parts, viz. *The Creatures condition,* in these words, *The Creature was made subject to vanity.* From whence we may observe thus much, That all the Creatures which are in the world, or ever have been since the fall of man, they are for the present in a vain condition:

tion: they are *vain* and *subject* to vanity. Take notice of *that*. The *Vanity* of the Creature, is a Point which is at large declared to us in that famous Book of the Preacher, which we call *Ecclesiastes*, who having him'self the experience of it, was best able to discover it, and accordingly does pass this Judgement upon it, *Vanity of Vanities, (saith the Preacher) Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity*. That which makes it up, and wherein it is considerable, may be reduced especially to two principal heads: First, its *Insufficiency*. And Secondly, its *Uncertainty*. Its *insufficiency*, in falling short of that *End* whereunto it was ordained; and its *uncertainty*, in soon decaying and fading away. These two meeting together, do imply the Creature to be *subject to Vanity*, as is here exprest.

First, Take it in its *Insufficiency*, and consider it *there*. A thing is then said to be *vain*, when it does not reach its *proper End*: nor does that for which it was intended. And thus is there a *Vanity upon the Creature in the world* since the fall of man. The Creature in its original ordination, and the first appointment of it was ordained for two ends. The one was the *glory of God*; and the other was the *good of man*. Now both of these ends does it in a sort very much come short of; yea is opposite unto them.

First, *The glory of God*: It does very much fail of *this*. Take the Creature considered in *it self*, and in its bare *objective representation*, and so it still brings *glory* to God, who is the *Maker and Creator* of it. *The Heavens declare the glory of God: and the Firmament sheweth his handy-work*, as it is in *Psal. 19. 1*. But now take it as man *perverts it*, and abuses it by his sin, and so it turns to a *contrary improvement*, and tends to *Gods dishonour*. This we may see in the *Idolatries* and *Superstitions* of *Heathenish* persons, who worship the *Sun*, and *Moon*, and *Stars*, and *Beasts*, &c. as some have done, and did thereby *dishonour God*; and so consequently *subjected the Creature*, which they so far abused, *even to vanity it self*. This we have signified to us as the reproach of the *Gentiles*, *Rom. 1. 21, 23*. *That when as they knew God, yet they glorified him not as God, but changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an Image made like unto corruptible Man, and to Birds, &c.* that is, they *dishonoured God* from the Creature, from which they should have given honour unto him. Thus is the Creature become *vain*, in falling short of that *End* which it was ordained for, *viz. the Glory of God*.

Secondly, *The Good of Man*: It also fails of *this*, and is perverted in *this* particular likewise: And that again in a *double respect*, whether *temporal* or *spiritual*. His *temporal* good, for the preservation of his *Body*: And his *spiritual* good, for the *edification of his Soul*. The Creature has a *vanity upon it*, so far as it is opposite to either, in the *improvement* of it.

First, *Mans temporal* good, and the preservation of the *outward* part of him. The Creature, it was at the first ordained for the good of *thou*: But in the *effect*, and as it falls out in the *event*, it is *perverted* to a *contrary purpose*. All the *Elements*, they are here *out of course*, and do degenerate, and conspire herein to *mans destruction*. The *Fire* which was ordained to warm him, is a means to *burn* him. And the *Water* which was ordained to *cleanse* him, is a means to *drown* him. And the *Earth* which was ordained to bear him, is a means to *swallow* him. And the *Air* which was ordained to *breath* him, is a means to *infect* him. The *Bread* which should nourish him, *choakes* him. And the *Drink* which should refresh him, *stifles* him. And the

the *Beasts* which should defend him, devour him. And so every Creature else, which in their place should be subservient to him for his comfort here in this world, they prove very hurtful and pernicious.

Secondly, Mans *spiritual good*: The Edification of his *Soul*. The Creature, it was given man at first, to be helpful to him here also. But now through mans fall, it is perverted another way, so far forth as he makes it subservient to the fulfilling, and accomplishing of his lusts; His Drunkenness, and Filthiness, and Pride, and Revenge, and the like. These are the improvements which man now puts the Creature unto; and thereby puts a vanity upon it. The Creature is made subject to vanity, in this regard; so far as, as that which should further mans goodness, it increases his sin; and that which should more promote him towards Heaven, it more sinks him down to Hell. And that which was ordained to be to Life, he now finds to be to Death, as it is spoken in another case, *Rom. 7. 10.*

The Use which we may make of this Observation to our selves comes to this; Namely, to teach us to labour to have the Creature sanctified to us: and so in a sort reduced to that estate which at first it was set in: For howsoever there is a Vanity upon the Creature, which is in full force to wicked men who are wholly and absolutely and altogether vain themselves; yet we must know that this vanity of it, is by Christ very much qualified and corrected, and taken off, and those who are members of him are much freed and delivered from it. This the Apostle has signified to us in that eminent Scripture, *1 Tim. 4. 4, 5.* Every Creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it is received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God, and Prayer. Where we see how that the right and sanctified use takes off from the malignity of it, and puts a kind of goodness into it. That which is otherwise pernicious, while it is sanctified, it becomes advantageous and profitable, and beneficial to us. Now the Creature is sanctified (as is exprest there in that place) two manner of waies. The one is by the word of God, on his part, as vouchsafing it. The other is by Prayer, on our part, as procuring it, and fetching out the virtue of it.

First, The Creature is sanctified on Gods part, by his word; and there is a threefold Word of his, which is considerable to this purpose: *First*, the word of Donation. *Secondly*, the word of Benediction. And *Thirdly*, the word of Promise. The word of Donation, whereby he bestows the Creature upon us. The word of Benediction, whereby he blesses the Creature to us. The word of Promise, whereby he makes a tender of this blessing.

First, The word of Donation, whereby he bestows the Creature upon us. God gave the Creatures to us, as soon as they were made, and we with them, *Gen. 1. 29.* Behold, I have given you every Herb, &c. Now although it is true that we have forfeited and lost this right in part, which we once had, by our own transgression, yet we are not wholly deprived of it; but it is still in some sort continued to man, even after his fall; as we may see by Gods Covenant which he made, and renewed with Noah after the Flood, *Gen. 9. 3.* So as we have a natural right unto them, and it is lawful for us in that consideration to make use of them.

Secondly, The word of Benediction, whereby he blesses the Creatures to us, that is, gives them a vertue and efficacy, for the doing of us good: without which they could not do it, as we have it, *Mat. 4. 4.* Man lives not by Bread, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God doth man

man live, that is, not only by the Creature it self, but by Gods blessing upon the Creature, inabling it, and accommodating it to such a purpose.

Thirdly, The word of Promise, whereby he makes a gracious tender of this blessing in Christ, in whom they have a new right hereunto, according to that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 3. 21. *All things are yours.* And this is that indeed which is here principally to be taken notice of by us. This is that which hath redeemed the Creature, in part, from that vanity which it is subject unto. Especially, which we must further add for the accomplishment and perfection of it, so far forth as this word of Promise is of us apprehended by Faith. We being members of Christ, and by Faith united to him, do in the exercise of this Faith partake of divers priviledges from him, whereof this is one amongst the rest to have a sanctified right in the Creature. He himself is Heir of all things; and as many of us as are Believers, we are joynt-heirs with him. That's one way, whereby the Creature is sanctified, to wit, by the word of God, on his part, as vouchsafing it.

The Second is by Prayer, on our part, as procuring it. This it sanctifies the Creature to us in a double regard: First, as it obtains from God a right improvement. And Secondly, as it obtaines from him likewise a comfortable enjoyment. For without the special gift of God, which is purchast in the use of this Ordinance, we are able to do neither of these things; neither to use the Creatures conscionably, nor yet to enjoy them comfortably: But Prayer it helps us to both.

First, To use them Conscionably; that those things which in themselves are lawful, may not become through our improvement sinful: that we abuse not strength to violence; nor honour to pride, nor wealth to oppression, nor Beauty to wantonness, nor learning to heresie, and the like. All which sins and miscarriages (where Grace does not prevent them) are in regard of our natural corruption annex to these several accommodations, so as we are apt and subject to abuse them and pervert them hereby. But now Prayer, it does get this from God: To keep our hearts from these defilements in the midst of these contentments; And so sanctifies the Creatures by enabling us to use them conscionably.

Secondly, To enjoy them comfortably. For without Gods special favour and blessing, though we partake of the things themselves; yet we can relish no sweetness in them at all. Now Prayer, it fetches this from him. It makes every thing to be so to us, as it was in its first institution. Our food to nourish us, our cloaths to warm us, our sleep to refresh us, our friends to prove friendly to us, &c. These are such things as many wicked persons want in their greatest possessions, because they neglect and forbear to sanctifie them to themselves by Prayer. Their very blessings are curst unto them, Mal. 2. 2. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the first piece of Vanity of the Creature, consisting in its insufficiency and failing of that first End whereunto it was ordained.

The Second is in regard of its uncertainty, its transitoriness and shortness of continuance. The Creature is subject to Vanity in this regard also. And so the Scripture does every where represent it to us. 1 Cor. 7. 31. *The fashion of this world passeth away,* τὸ *κῆνος.* The very frame and habit of it, it is passing and fading. 1 Job. 2. 17. *The world passeth away, and the lusts thereof.* Heaven and Earth, it is said, shall pass away. They shall all wax old as cloth

doth a garment. The Earth, and all the works which are in it, and which belong unto it, shall pass away also. Your Riches are corrupted, your Garments moth-eaten, your Gold and Silver cankered, &c. Jam. 5. 3. This is the Nature of these worldly matters, but as a Shew, and Pageant, and there's an End.

This it hath a twofold ground and foundation for it: The one is mans sin, which hath deserved it; And the other is Gods Counsel, which hath ordained it.

First, The sin of man, that hath deserved it. The Heavens and Earth are harmless; yet because they were made for mans sake, they bear the tokens of Gods wrath against man for his sin. As we have it in Esa. 24. 5. The Earth is defiled under the Inhabitants thereof: because they have transgressed the Laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting Covenant, &c.

Secondly, Gods Counsel, that hath so ordained it. God has curst the Earth for mans sake, and thereby brought destruction upon it. Thus he threatens to be to Ephraim a Moth: and to the house of Judah as rottenness, Hof. 5. 12. He sends the Palmer-worm, and the Canker-worm, and the Caterpillar, and the Locusts, and such as these, to devour and to destroy the fruits of the Earth. But of this more largely hereafter in its proper place.

The Consideration of this Point is thus far useful to us. First, It teaches us from hence to put no stress or confidence in the Creature: when Riches increase set not your heart upon them, Psal. 62. 10. And again, Prov. 23. 5. why shouldst thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings, they fly away as an Eagle towards heaven. And so for any thing else, we should labour to enjoy it with a spirit of sobriety, and self-denial, and moderation. Being they are Creatures, enjoy them as Creatures, that is, as such things as are subject to Vanity, and fading away; not expecting more from them than the nature of the things themselves will bear: which it is a folly for us to do, as making us the greater work, and trouble, when we come to part with them: whereas what we enjoy with moderation, we are more ready to forgo with patience, and contentment of mind. The vanity of the Creature, in regard of the transitoriness, should work us to a contentation of spirit in two particulars; when either at any time we want them, or having had them, are deprived of them.

First, It should very much satisfy us in the want and denial of them; when we look upon others and see them full of such comforts as we, perhaps, want our selves: here's that which may stay our minds in it, that alas, they are no such great matters, as we should set such a value upon. Forasmuch as they are soon passing, and fading, and flying away: together with the owners of them. And thus the Scripture it self teaches us to improve it, as Psal. 49. 16, 17. Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house increaseth; when he dyeth he shall carry nothing away, &c. Then,

Secondly, As for being deprived of them. They are things which did promise no better in the very first partaking of them: And therefore, it cannot be wondered at, that they are so at last. It's counted a piece of vanity in worldly persons, to think that their Houses shall continue for ever, and their dwellings to all Generations, and so dispose of themselves accordingly, in Psal. 49. 11. And this is One Use, and Improvement which we may make of this present observation. But,

Secondly, Is the Creature thus subject to *vanity* in regard of the *Transitoriness* of it, then let us hold our selves so much more to the Creator, in whom is no *Vanity* or *Variableness* or *shadow* of turning. It should indear God himself so much the rather to us while we see the *sickleness* and *uncertainty* of all these things here below. We should therefore not forsake the fountain of living waters, and seek to our selves broken pitchers which will hold none; as God layes it to the charge of his people in *Jer. 2. 13*. This is the excellency of *Christianity* and true Religion indeed; that it has these things in it, in some sense and proportion, which the world also has; but with this advantage, that it has them with that *duration* and *long continuance* which the world has not: waters which fail not, as the Scripture expresses it. It has riches which are never corrupted, and honours which are never blasted, and pleasures for evermore: Mary hath chosen that better part which shall not be taken away from her, *Luk. 10. 42*. And so now I have done with the First General Part of the Text which is the Creatures Condition in these words, *For the Creature was made subject unto Vanity*.

The Second is the Cause or Occasion of this Condition, which (as I said) is laid down two manner of wayes: First, *Negatively*, *Not willingly*. Secondly, *Affirmatively*, *But by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope*.

First, Take it in the *Negative*, *not willingly*, *ex inuoluntate*, what's the meaning of that? that is, not of its own proper instinct and propensity and inclination: for what the will is in things Rational, that the Inclination is in things Natural, and the one is by a borrowed speech transferred to the other here in this place. The Creature of its own accord is not subject to *Vanity*: forasmuch as every thing naturally desires the preservation of it self. So that this is that which is here observable of us, That the *Vanity* of the Creature, it is accidental and preternatural to it. And therefore is afterwards in this Chapter called *Bondage*, which is an *unwilling subjection*. What this *Vanity* of it is, and wherein it consists, I have already declared: Both in regard of the *Insufficiency* of it, as failing of its first end, for which it was ordained to be serviceable to the good of man, *Temporal and Spiritual*; as also in regard of the *uncertainty* of it, as being *transitory*, and fading away. Now either of these duly considered are against the natural Inclination of the Creature: we may see it, and take notice of it in each of these particulars.

First, In the failing of its first end, for which it was made. This is preternatural to it. The Creature in its first institution was made in reference and subordination to man, and so naturally does delight to be useful and serviceable to him, for his good, and especially, and above all things, for the good and welfare of his soul. But now for to be a slave to his Lust, and Instrumental to his execution of wickedness, as sometime it proves to be through mans corruption; this is a thing which is directly contrary to the nature and disposition of it. The Creature, if it had been left to it self, it would never have been so; It would never have serv'd man to these base and filthy purposes and performances that now it does.

Again, On the other side, it would never have been useful to the outward good of wicked men as now it is, which is another part of that *Vanity*, which it is now subject unto. The Creature being left to it self would alwaies have been a Punisher and an Avenger of ungodly persons; and would ever and anon, and continually

continually risen up in Execution of the Quarrel of its Maker. Whereas now we many times see that it is otherwise, and it does *promiscuously* convey outward comforts to the *wicked*, as well as to the *righteous*. The Sun it shines upon the *bad* as well as upon the *good*, and the Rain it falls upon the *unjust* as well as upon the *just*. This (I say) is a part of the *vanity of the Creature*, which of its own nature it is *not lyable to*.

And there's a *Double Inference*, which accordingly may be drawn from it. *First*, Seeing the Creature is oftentimes instrumental to wicked mens lusts contrary to the nature of it; we see here a *special aggravation* of the *fearfulness and grievousness of sin*; forasmuch, as it is not only a *Defacing of the Image of God in our selves*, and a corruption of that *purity of nature*, wherein our selves were at first *Created*; but also consequently a *Defacing of the Creature*, and a *violent drawing of that into a contrariety to its first principles*. Every Drunkard, and Glutton, and Intemperate and Luxurious person, he offers violence to his fellow-Creatures.

Again, *Secondly*, Seeing the Creature is also *serviceable* oftentimes to wicked men as a means of outward good unto them instead of *destroying them*, we see here the *infinite goodness and indulgence of God* towards them in *over-powering* the creature contrary to the *proper nature and inclination* of it, for the greater *shame and conviction* of such persons as these are. Thus is this *Vanity of the Creature preternatural*, in coming short of its first institution.

It is so likewise in regard of the *uncertainty and transitoriness* of it. It is subject to *vanity thus*, not *willingly*, or of its own accord neither. The meaning whereof is not this, as if the Creatures did at first consist of such kind of *Principles*, as did *absolutely indispose* them to *change and corruption*, for so they did not: Being made at first of *nothing*, they were of themselves reducible to *nothing*. There was an *enmity* and kind of *reluctancy* in their *intirest Being*; and by the Law of their first *Creation* they were subject to *change and alteration*: so that this *Transitoriness* of them is thus far as it were *Natural* to them: but in this sense it is said to be *preternatural*, so far forth as they do *naturally desire the preservation of themselves*.

This it should teach men especially which are endued with reason and understanding, thus far to comply with them, as to take heed of being any way guilty of hastening their own ends, and self-destruction. The contray whereof is taught to them by the very propensity of the Creature it self, and that whether directly or indirectly.

But the *main and chief use* of all which may be made of this present observation comes to this, even to *condemn* a great many persons which we meet withall sometimes in the world, of that *voluntary and wilfull vanity of conversation*, which is sometimes to be observed in them. If the Creature be not *willingly* subject to *vanity* in reference to *naturals*, what a shame is it for *Men and women* to be so in reference to *morals*? yet this is that which is daily to be observed by us in abundance of people: And never more than in these times and places wherein we live. Never were people more vain, and willingly subject to vanity, than now they are. Vanity in *all kinds*, and in all expressions of vanity; vanity in our speeches and discourse, vanity in our pastimes and recreations, vanity in our garments and attire, vanity in our Houses, and especially vanity in our *Hearts*; we cannot look aside, but we behold *vanity*; and love to do so. We *delight in vanity*, as the Scripture sometimes complains of it. That we are indeed *willingly* and of our own accord

accord *subject* to it, may appear by our whole carriage, and behaviour concerning it. For besides that we do not *resist* it, we do *imbrace* it and close with it; we *invite* it, yea we *intreat* it. It is not *Vanitas invita*, but *invitata*: not *declined* by us, but rather *pursued*. Now let us consider what a great evil and disparagement this is unto us. There's no such slave in the world, as a *wilful* and *voluntary* slave. For any one *to be subject* and *in bondage*, and to be *content* and to be *desirous* to be so, this is *strange* and *abominable*. Why thus now are we *to our vanities*, and thus now are we *to our lusts*, which we are so far from *crossing* or *thwarting*, as that we do not so much as *lament* or *lay to heart*. The Creatures *groan* under their *vanity*, but we *laugh* and *sing* under ours, which is the *highest degree* of *madness* and *distemper* that can possibly be *thought of*. And so much may be spoken of that particular; The Account of this condition in the *Negative*, *Not Wil-lingly*.

The *Second* is in the *Affirmative*. But by reason of him who hath *subjected* the same in *hope*; that is, by reason of God the *Creator*, who for the *sin* of man *curst* the Creature hath *subjected* it to *vanity* and to *Corruption*. In *hope*; that is, not *irrecoverably*, but *reserving* to it a *possibility* of *returning* to its former estate. There are two particulars which are here observable of us. *First*, The *Efficacious Dispensation*: and *Secondly*, The *Additional Qualification*. The *Efficacious Dispensation*, that's in these words, *By reason of him who hath subjected the Creature to this vanity*. The *Additional Qualification* in these; *In hope*.

First, For the *Dispensation* it self; that is, the *subjecting* of the *Creature* to *Vanity*, which is here intimated and implied to be done by God himself. It is He who is the *Person* that hath done it, and that (as I gave you an hint of it before) for the *sin* of man. Mans *sin* as the *Demeritorious* cause; and Gods *curse* as the *immediate* cause hath brought this evil upon the Creature. The Creature, it is *subjected* to *Vanity* for mans *sin*. That's the *Point*, which we have here before us. And it is that which the Scripture confirms to us abundantly in sundry places of it: as *Gen. 3. 17*. When Adam had there *sinned* in eating of the *forbidden fruit*; hear what the Lord sayes to him: *Now Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the dayes of thy Life: Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee, &c.* So to Cain afterwards upon his *fratricide*, his killing of his Brother, *Gen. 4. 12*. *Now cursed art thou from the Earth; when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength. So Levit. 26. 19, 20. I will make your Heaven as iron, and your Earth as brass; and your strength shall be spent in vain, for your Land shall not yield her increase, &c.* And *Deut. 28. 38. Thou shalt carry much seed into the field, but shalt gather little, &c.*

And as this holds good in *General*, so to some Persons more especially in particular, who do more fully and directly partake of the vanity of the Creature in this particular which God threatens to them for their *sin*. There's a *Curse* which belongs to every thing which they deal withall, or have interest in. A *Curse* upon their *Estates*. Their riches are corrupted, their garments moth-eaten: their gold and silver cankered; and the rust of them is a witness against them, *Sam. 5. 2, 3*. A *Curse* upon their *habitations* and magnificent Buildings. *I will smite the winter-house and the summer-house, and the houses*

houses of Ivory, and the great houses shall have an end, Amos 3. 15. A curse upon their Employments and the labour of their hands, The people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity, Hab. 2. 13. There's a flying roll which enters in amongst them, as a curse which goes over the face of the whole earth, as it is in Zech. 5. 2, 3, &c. And this for sin.

The Ground of this Dispensation does proceed from that near Relation which is betwixt Man and the Creature. It may seem a very strange matter, that the Creature which has done no hurt at all should be thus punisht for the sin of man: But if we seriously and thoroughly consider it, it is no great wonder or marvel at all; forasmuch as man is the subordinate Lord and Master and Governour of the Creatures: They are his servants and therefore upon his Transgression are lyable to a Curse and Condemnation. We know how it is sometimes in the affairs and businesses of men: That some kind of Malefactors, they are punisht not only in their Persons but in their Relations, to put the greater terror upon their miscarriages, and to make them more odious. The Children and servants suffer now and then for their Parents and Masters enormities. And so it is now likewise here in the dealings and dispensations of the Almighty: Mans sin it is punisht in the Creature, because the punishment of the Creature redounds to the punishment of man for whose use it serves and is ordained: as ye know it was once in the sin of Corah, and Dathan, and Abiram, Numb. 16. 32. It is said that the Earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Corah, and all their goods: see here, not only their Persons, but their Houses; and not only themselves, but their servants and their goods, and all belonging unto them. Even so now here in the Rebellion of man against his Maker: not only himself, but his fellow-creatures with him. As under the Levitical Law there was a Leprosie not only in mens Bodies but likewise in their garments and houses, to signifie to us the Infection and contagious spreading nature of sin.

The Proper Use and Improvement of this Point to be made by our selves comes to this: First, To inform and convince us of the great misery which is in sin. We may see what an Evil this is, that marring all that come near it, and do occasionally border upon it, and those who are the committers of it. Men are ready in the heat of their Lusts, and when Temptations are strong upon them, to look upon sin, but as an ordinary and trifling business, and which has no great matter in it: But let them look upon it here in the Curse and Punishment which is annex unto it, and inflicted upon it: let them see, and observe, and take notice, what work and disorder and confusion it here creates in the Creature it self, and then tell me what it is for any to be guilty of the Commission of it. We see here, what it is to provoke such a Great and Holy God as this is who cannot endure to behold iniquity: and whom the Scripture represents to us as a consuming Fire. The Punishment being so far redundant shews the occasion and provocation to be very Great.

Secondly, We see here, whom to blame and to find fault withall in the miscarriages of the Creatures, and in our own Disappointments from them. When they do not prove so serviceable to us in some cases, and at some times as we expect and desire they should. And that is even our own selves, who are indeed the proper causes of it. In a time of pestilence, and sickness, and contagion, let us not so much lay the fault upon the air, and the corruption and infection thereof; but rather lay the fault upon the Inhabitant, that lives and

and dwells in that air, and provokes God to it by *his sins*. That *corrupt air*, which men breath out of their own mouths in Oaths, and Blasphemies, and curfings, and rotten speeches, and vain, and frothy and frivolous communications. And in *bad and unseasonable weather*, If it be *drought*, the dryness of our hearts, that cannot mourn for sin: And if it be *floods*, the *overflowings of our wickedness*, and inundations of *sin*. God's Quarrel is not so much against the *Creature*, as against *our selves* in such cases. As the Prophet *Habbakkuk* expostulates to this purpose, in Hab. 3. 8. *Was the Lord displeased with the Rivers? was thine anger against the Rivers? was thy wrath against the Sea?* No, it was no such matter. And therefore let us not lay the fault there upon such occasions, but rather as I said upon our own hearts and lives: Otherwise we shall in this case be like *Balaam*, who contended and contested with *his beast*, and rated, and smote his *Ass*, when as the fault indeed lay in himself.

Thirdly, Here's matter of Just abasement, and mourning, and humiliation, when we shall consider the *great mischief* which we contract by *our sins*; not only to *our selves*, but others. There are *divers considerations* which should make sin to be very irksome and tedious to us: The *Dishonour it brings to God*, the *Offence which it gives to our Brethren*, the *Danger which it occasions to our selves and to our own souls*. But this is over and above another evil which is considerable in it as aggravating the mischievousness of it, The *vanity which it hath brought upon the Creature*, and that bondage wherein it hath intrall'd it, and made it subject unto. Instead of our being *bettered by the Creatures*, the *Creatures* are so much the worse for *us*, and are *prejudiced*, and *disparaged by us*. Every *ingenuous spirit* is grieved to be offensive to another and to be any way, (though but *accidentally*) the occasion of *another's ruine and undoing*. And so it should be here with our selves in this regard: And we should from hence so much the more effectually work *our selves to a spirit of mourning*, and remorse and humiliation for *sin*.

Fourthly, We should from hence take heed, that we do not *willingly wrong* the poor *Creatures*, or do any injury to them. There are many people which *delight in cruelty*, and *sport themselves* in such kind of *ways as these* are. But we should be *very wary* and tender of it. Forasmuch as that evil which is upon them, they may thank *us* our selves for it, as the first occasions of it. Our *sin* hath occasioned their suffering; And *Vanity* first on *our* part is the *Ground* and cause of *Vanity*, on *theirs*. Therefore we should be merciful towards them, and not use extremity against them. A *righteous man* (saith *Solomon*) *regardeth the very life of his beast*, Prov. 12. 10.

Lastly, As the *Creatures* serve *men in their sins*, contrary to their *Natural Inclination*; Even so should *men* serve God in *well-doing* against the bent of their *natural corruption*; and be *subject to the Law of God*, by reason of *him* who hath commanded, and required this *subjection* from them. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the *First Particular* which is here propounded to be considered; to wit, the *Efficacious Dispensation it self*. By reason of *him*, &c.

The *Second* is the *Additional Qualification* of this Dispensation; in these words, *I hope*: Where the Apostle still speaks of the *Creature* as of a *rational Person*, as he did in the words before, by the same continued figure of *Prosopoeia*. As he had before attributed to it *desire*, and *expectation*, and *will*;

so here now he attributes to it *Hope*. When we speak of *Hope*, it is considerable two manner of wayes. Either in the *subject* of it, or in the *Ground* of it: Either in the *Person*, or in the *Condition*. Then any are said to be in *hope*, when they are in an *hopeful way*, or *estate*; or then any are said to be in *hope*, when they do *hopefully conceive* of themselves in that *estate*. Now it is not so much the *Latter*, as the *Former*, which seems to be here intended; God hath subjected the *Creature* to an *estate* of *present vanity* and *corruption*; so as reserving to it a *possibility* of *returning* to its *former estate* wherein it was created. That which we may note from hence is this, That the *Vanity* of the *Creature*, it is such as that there is ground to *expect* in due time the *removal* of it from it: though it be *subject* to *vanity* for the *present*, yet it is not to be thought that it will *alwaies* be so with it.

First, Because this *vanity*, which is now upon it, it is *only accidental* and *occasional*: It is not from any *demerit* in it self, but only from the *sin* of *man*, as we have formerly shewn. Now that *Vanity*, which was only *Accidental*, is not likely to be *Perpetual*.

Secondly, The *sins* of *men*, for whose sake this *vanity* is inflicted, and from whom it is decreed, they shall *some* of them be delivered from that *vanity* which is upon them, therefore there is *great* cause to believe, that the *Creatures* shall also *some* of them partake of the like *proportionable deliverance*. This is expressly declared in the following verse of this Chapter, which we shall the next time (God willing) speak of and handle more distinctly; and is added and brought in as the *matter* of the *Hope* here mentioned, by reading the word *in*, not *Causally* only, but *Demonstratively*: By reason of him who hath subjected the same in *hope*: That the *Creature* it self shall be delivered, &c. Where the *Object* of the *Creatures hope* is made to be its own *Recovery*.

And therefore *Thirdly*, As another *Ground* of it, we have the *promise* and *word* of God himself making for it. The *Scripture* does signify as much about it; and therefore there is *cause* and *reason* to *expect* it, and to *hope* for the *Accomplishment* of it.

This may discover to us the *Different nature* of that *Curse*, which is inflicted upon the *Creature*; and that *Judgement*, which does belong to *Incorrigible* and *reprobate Persons*. We see here the *Different Condition* of *fallen men*, and of *fallen Angels* and *Devils*. The one is a *Condition irrecoverable*, while the other is a *Condition of Hope*. As for the *Fallen Angels* and *Devils*, who kept not their *principality* or *first estate*, but left their own *Habitation*, they are reserved in *everlasting chains* under *darkness*, unto the *Judgement* of the *great Day*; as the *Apostle Jude* tells us, in the 6th. verse of that *Epistle*. They are *desperate*, and there's no *hope* at all for them. And for *men* and *women* which are *absolutely incorrigible*, and *impenitent*, and resolve to be so; they can conceive no *good hope* of themselves neither, so long as they remain in that condition. The Lord reserves the wicked unto the day of *Judgement* to be punished, as the *Apostle Peter* also tells us: in 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. The Lord will consume them with the *spirit* of his mouth, and destroy them with the *brightness* of his coming; as the *Apostle Paul* also tells us of *Antichrist* and his *Adherents*, 2 *Thes.* 2. 8. But now as for the other *Creatures* they have an *hope*, which they are *partakers* of, according to that which in their proper nature they are capable of. And *men* also, who *repent* and *believe*, have a *proportionable hope* also, while it is minded and regarded by them. They are subjected (as it is here said) in *hope*. This

This should accordingly teach us to *lay hold upon this hope which is set before us*. It should stir us all up to *imbrace the present opportunity* of Grace, and Life, and Salvation, which are afforded unto us, and therein acknowledge the Goodness of God towards us: *To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*. Now that there is a *door of hope opened*, let us be careful to *enter in* by it, for fear lest being *neglected* it should prove to be *stops up*, and shut upon us.

Let us take heed of *sinning wilfully* after we have received the knowledge of the truth: If any time we *miscarry*, let it be *unawares*, and against our *minds*. For we see in the Text, how those *two* are joyned together in the *Creature*. Its being *subject to Vanity* *not willingly*; And its being in *hope* to be in time *freed, and delivered from this subjection*; And so accordingly, and proportionably we may conclude it to be the case with our selves. So much *wearisomness* as is in us of *sin*; so much *hope* to be delivered from it, and the ill consequents of it. So much for that. And so I have done also with this whole Verse, *For the Creature was made subject to Vanity, &c.*



SERMON XXIV.

R O M. 8. 21.

Because the Creature it self also shall be delivered from the bondage of Corruption.

The Apostle Peter speaking of the Apostle Paul's Epistles, in 2 Pet. 3. 16. tells us that there are some things in them, which are hard to be understood (mā dīrīā). And it is thought by reflecting upon some particular passages in that Chapter, and the general scope of it, that he does refer more especially to this Text, which we have now before us; Being indeed a very difficult Scripture, and such as carries a great deal of intricacy and perplexity with it: By so much the more do we need the Assistance of the Holy Spirit of God, who alone hath the key of it, for the unlocking and opening of it to us; that we come not in our own strength, or in the confidence of our own abilities, and natural sagacity, to the search and scrutiny of such mysteries as these are, but in a total Dependence upon Him for the enlightning and informing of us, in the things which are propounded. And by so much the more also do we need to give the greater heed and attention to the things which are spoken, lest at any time we let them slip; and our selves slip from our miscarriage about them.

These words which I have now read unto you, are added, as a further reason of that which was premised in the 19th Verse of this Chapter, concerning the Creatures desire and earnest expectation of the Time of the manifestation of the Sons of God, and the priviledges attending upon it; and it is resolv'd into this Conclusion, as a main ground and occasion of it; That the Creature it self shall proportionably partake of this Priviledge; Because it self also shall be delivered from the bondage of Corruption into, &c.

IN the Text it self, there are two general Parts considerable; First, the Future Estate and condition of all Believers, as that which is supposed. Secondly, the Future Correspondency of the Creature to this Estate and Condition, as that which is declared. The future Estate of Believers as supposed, that's intimated in these words, *The glorious Liberty of the children of God, the Correspondency of the Creature to this Estate, as declared; that's exprest in these. The Creature shall be delivered, &c.*

A a a

We

We begin with the *First* of these Parts, viz. The *future Estate and Condition* of Believers, which is *supposed* in these words, *The glorious liberty of the Children of God*. From whence we may observe thus much, that there is such a *state and condition* indeed as *this is*; a *state of glorious liberty*, which does await such Persons as those are in *another world*. There's a *double liberty* which does belong to the *people of God*, as proper unto them; The *one* is the *Liberty of Grace* here in *this Life*, and that's the *liberty of Regeneration*; The *other* is the *liberty of Glory* in *the life to come*; and that's the *liberty of the Resurrection*. And the *former*, it doth refer to the *latter*; according to that of *St. Peter*, in *1 Pet. 1. 3.* who hath begotten us again to a *lively hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*; that is, by vertue of *Christs Resurrection*, which is both the *Fountain of our Regeneration*, and the *Foundation of our future Glory*. Now the *latter* is that which is at *this time* and here in *this place* considerable of us; namely, *the glorious liberty of Gods Children at the general Resurrection*. This (for the better opening of it to us) is reducible to *three Heads*, whereof it does consist; First, in the *liberty of their Bodies*. Secondly, in the *liberty of their Souls*: and Thirdly, of their *whole Persons*.

First, Their *Bodies* shall be free from those *Evils and Infirmities* which they are *here* subject unto. Here we see how *many Sickneses*, and *Diseases* they do daily lye under; and to how *many wrongs and injuries* they are *exposed* from wicked men, both *living and dead*. But there's a time a coming, when they shall be *freed and exempt from all*; God shall wipe away all *tears* from his *Childrens Eyes*, and there shall be no *more death, nor sorrow, nor crying*; neither shall be any *more pain*, as it is in *Revel. 21. 4.* Thus shall the *Body* be freed from that *vileness* which is now upon it, and thereby become *glorious*, according to that of the *Apostle* in *Philip. 3. 21.* Speaking of *Christ* at his coming, who shall change our *vile Body*, that it may be made like unto his *glorious body*, according to his power, &c. our *Bodies* shall be then made conformable to the *Body of Christ*, which is free from all those reproaches which our *bodies* now are attended withall. They are *sown in Corruption*, but shall be *rais'd in Incorruption*, *sown in Dishonour*, but *rais'd in Glory*, in *2 Cor. 15. 43, &c.*

This may serve very much to *satisfie* them in all the present inconveniences and disparagements, which may now fall upon them. Those who are now troubled with *pains and aches*, fill'd with *Sores and Ulcers*, deprived of *Limbs and Senses*, or are exercis'd with any other deformity or imperfection, which is incident to them, here's that which may *relieve* them; That if they be such as are the *true Children of God*, they shall be one day deliver'd from them, and have a greater beauty and glory *instead of it*, put upon them; whereas those which are otherwise never so beautiful, with all the *Art* they use to that purpose, and not being in the number of *Gods people*, they shall hereafter be most *ugly and deformed*; *Lazarus* who was *full of Sores*, he was freed from them in *Abraham's bosom*; and so shall others with him.

Secondly, As there shall be a *liberty of the Body* at that time, so of the *soul* likewise. First, from those *Natural defects*, which are now adherent to it; as *ignorance, forgetfulness, indiscretion, weakness of* imagi-

imagination : And Secondly, from *Spiritual* distempers, and *inordinacy of passion*, &c. Now the *Superior* part of the Soul is oftentimes a *slave* to the *Inferior* ; and *Reason* is in subjection to *Appetite* and *Sensuality*, and the *outward man* ; But then it shall not be so, now there are many *Lusts and Corruptions*, which hang about the Soul, and retard it in its way to Heaven ; The weight that *presses down*, and the Sin that *easily besets them*, as the Apostle calls it, *Heb. 12. 1.* So that they cannot so *freely run* that race which is set before them ; but these things shall be then wholly removed, and taken away from them, and a glorious freedom, and liberty of Soul shall be confer'd upon it in the *stead* of them.

And this is another *sweet incouragement* likewise to all the Saints and Servants of God ; Especially such as *groan* under their present *weaknesses*, and imperfections, and the bondage of a *distracted Spirit*, which cannot perform Holy Duties with that *freedom and enlargement* as they desire. But have many *present hinderances*, and interruptions, and distractions upon them, and *Satan* using all his might and power that may be against them : This is that which may comfort them, that it shall not be *always thus with them*. But they shall serve God hereafter with more ease and facility of Spirit. They that wait upon the Lord, they shall *renew* their strength, *they shall mount up with Eagles wings*, *they shall run and not be weary*, *they shall walk and not faint*. *Esay, 40. ult.* They shall serve God indefatigably and readily, as the *Blessed and glorious Angels* themselves, *Pf. 103. 20.*

Thirdly, for their *whole Persons* ; there shall be a liberty of *them* also. They shall be free in *Body and Soul* together ; and they shall be free in their *names* from those *reproaches*, which are here cast upon them. They shall have a *glorious liberty*, as they shall be exempted from all *un-gloriousness* and disparagement which is here incident to *them*. In these and the like respects is this blessed Estate and Condition here mentioned to be understood by us.

The Use which we are to make of it is, That seeing there is such a blessed Estate as this is to be expected, that therefore *we would* for *our parts* labour to have a *share in it*. And for this purpose endeavour to be so qualified as those which may partake of it. Here's a *glorious liberty* mention'd ; but we see here who are mention'd likewise as the proper *subjects* of it ; and that is those who are the *Children of God*. It is call'd *their liberty* *Emphatically*, and it is call'd their liberty *exclusively*, as shutting out all others from it, who are not such as they are : Those who do not partake of a *gracious liberty* in *this world*, they shall never be partakers of a *glorious liberty* in the *world to come*. And this we may in part gather from the *order* of the words in the Text, in what is said of the Creature, That it must first be *deliver'd from the bondage of Corruption*, before it be translated into a state of *perfection* ; And so proportionably it must be with men also. Therefore let those who are still *slaves* to their lusts, and delight to be so, take heed of flattering themselves in this particular. It is the liberty of the *Children of God*, and of none other which is here spoken of. Those who are Servants to *Sin*, are Slaves to *Satan* ; and so much may suffice to have spoken of the first *general part* of the Text, as that which is here sup-

posed; the *future Estate* and Condition of all Believers intimated in those words, the glorious liberty of the Children of God.

The Second, which is the *principal*, is the *Correspondency* of the Creature to this Condition, as that which is declared, express'd in these words; That the *Creature it self shall be delivered from the bondage of Corruption* into this glorious liberty of Gods Children; Where first we must explain the words, and then proceed to that point of Doctrine which is exhibited, and tendered to us in them. Here are three terms to be explained: First, what is meant by the *Creature*; Secondly, what is meant by the *bondage of Corruption*; Thirdly, what is meant by the *Creatures being delivered* into the glorious liberty of Gods Children.

First, By the *Creature* we are to understand (as I have formerly told you) the Heaven and Earth, and all things contained in them, which we behold besides our selves: the whole frame and body of the Creation in all particulars. For whereas some would hereby understand the *Rational Creature*, it is unagreeable to the Text in the general scope of it: For if so, it must be either *Angells or men*. It cannot be the *Good Angells*, for they are not subject to vanity. It cannot be the *Evil Angells*, for they are not capable of Deliverance. Again, if *men*; it must either be the Godly, or the wicked. It cannot be the Godly, for they are expressly distinguished from this Creature, in the 23 verse of this Chapter. Not only they but our selves. Nor it cannot be the wicked, for they do not expect or desire, but rather hinder and oppose the manifestation and glorious Liberty of the children of God. By the *Creature* therefore we are to understand the *dumb Creatures*.

Secondly, By the *Bondage of corruption*, we are to understand that *Vanity of Condition* which the Creature, through *mans Transgression* (as we have shewn) is now subject unto.

Thirdly, By being delivered into the glorious Liberty of Gods children, we are to understand, the *Creatures partaking* (in their capacity) of that *Liberty and freedome from vanity*, which in the children of God at the *Resurrection*, shall be accompanied with *unspeakable Glory*. It is not said, That the *Creatures* shall be partakers with the Saints in *Glory*, but that they shall be partakers of that liberty, which in the Saints, shall have *Glory attending it*, and *super-added* unto it. That which is but *single*, and *simple Liberty* in the *Creatures*, it shall be *double and glorious Liberty* in the children of God. Where we may further very pertinently observe the happy and *subtle opposition* which is here made of those terms in the Text, *Bondage of Corruption*, and *Liberty of Glory*. The point in brief is this, That the *Creature* at the *day of Judgment*, shall be restored to that *Liberty of condition* which it once had in its *first Creation*. Look, as when it was made at the first, it was free from all vanity and corruption. It was only serviceable to the Glory of God, and those ends for which it was made; Even so shall it be also hereafter, at the time of the *General Resurrection*. It shall be free from its present evils and burdens, and inconveniences; and made serviceable, though not to mans good, who shall have no further need of it; yet to Gods honour and glory, that made it, and gave *Beginning* unto it. This is in part intimated unto us in *Act. 3. 22. Whom the Heavens must receive, till the time of the restitution of all things*: where all things are implied to be such as are again to be restored.

This

This will appear to be so upon these two following considerations. First, The ground of its Vanity ceasing, the *thing it self is to cease likewise*. Now that being the sin of man, and that Vanity which was upon him for his Transgression, which shall then be taken away; The *Vanity* of the Creature, which is *consequent, and falling thereupon*, must cease also. As the Creature was subjected to Bondage, upon mans subjection, so it shall be now freed from Bondage upon mans *Liberty*. It holds good by way of Analogy.

Secondly, By way of *Redundancy*, and the overflowings of Gods goodness, who in advancing of Man himself, does together with him advance all that belong unto him. As it is in the Affairs of men, when any person has any special place of honour or dignity bestowed upon him, his servants, and those which are about him, do partake of it with him; they have their new Liveries and Habits, and sometimes their new houses and habitations. Even so is it also here in this case, in Gods *advancing of Believers*, while he raises them to a state of glorious Liberty, and delivers them from their former Bondage & corruption; He do's proportionably somewhat like to it for the *Creature* upon their *account*. This is still the property of Gods children, that all things fare the better for their sakes. It is so oftentimes here in this life, according to their conversation in the World, but it shall be so especially in the life to come, and the time of the General Restauration: Then the Creature shall be *delivered from Bondage*, and translated to a state of proportionable Liberty and Perfection together with them, and occasionally from them.

For our better proceeding in this Point which we have now in hand, it may here seasonably be demanded, In what *Manner* this is to be done? and how this Deliverance of the Creature here spoken of, is hereafter to be accomplished? It admits of a very great Dispute amongst Divines, who are much divided in this particular, and that amongst men of equal *Piety and Learning*. Now it may be reduced to two Opinions especially, which are prevalent to this purpose. The first Opinion is this, *That this Deliverance of the Creature from the Bondage of Corruption, shall be by Abolition, or Annihilation*; that is, That these Creatures shall hereafter, at the Day of Judgment, be *totally and absolutely extinguished*, and turn'd into nothing. The second Opinion is this, *That this Deliverance of the Creature from corruption, shall not be by way of Annihilation, but only by way of Alteration*; That they shall not be destroyed, but changed, and become new; not for *substance*, but only for *quality*. Now we will look upon these two Opinions distinctly, and consider which of them seems to carry the greatest likelihood and probability of truth with it.

First, To speak of the former, which holds this deliverance of the Creature from Bondage here mentioned, to be accomplished *by an absolute abolition and annihilation* of it. This, it hath divers *Authors* of great note and eminency for it; but as I conceive, (under favour) is *repugnant*, and will not hold good, upon these following grounds.

First, Because this *Future estate of the Creature*, which is here mentioned in the Text, it is exprest to be such as is *earnestly desired* by the Creature; but now there is no Creature whatsoever, which doth naturally desire

desire the *extinction*, or *annihilation* of it self, but rather the contrary: *Refugit natura non-esse*; Nature, it does abhor non-entity, and chooses the preservation of it self oftentimes, even in the *greatest extremity*. To say therefore that the Creature at the last day shall be turn'd into nothing, and yet that the Creature should *look and long* for this time, and the consequents of it, is a thing wholly *incongruous and inconsistent* with the nature of the creature; which is by no means to be fastened upon it.

Secondly, That which shall befall the Creature at the day of Judgment, is here in the Text expressly called the *Deliverance of it*. Now a deliverance does necessarily suppose the *Being and existence* of that subject which is delivered. That cannot be said to be *delivered*, which ceases to be, because there is nothing left as the *Ground and Foundation* of such deliverance. Again, here in the Text (as is proper to every deliverance) heres a mention of two different terms, between which it is carryed. The term from which, and that is the *Bondage of Corruption*: The term to which, and that is the *Glorious Liberty of Gods children*. Now the *annihilating or abolishing of the Creature*, it hath respect to one of those only; it hath respect to the term from which, in freeing from *corruption*: but it hath no respect to the term to which, in conferring of a *Glorious Liberty*; and therefore does not come up to the full sense and scope of the Text. To say that the Creature is *delivered from vanity* by being *annihilated and turned into nothing*, is as if we should say, That a *sick man* were cured of his *sickness*, by being *deprived of his life*. For Annihilation can no otherwise be said to be a *Deliverance from corruption*, then as *Death* is said to be the *Remedy of all diseases*. But now besides a *Negative benefit* here intended to the Creature in its freedom from *Vanity*, and *Bondage*, and *Corruption*, there is moreover intended a *Positive*, in being made partaker of the highest perfection that it is capable of. To be delivered meerly to non-entity, is no deliverance indeed at all.

Thirdly, It is said here also in the Text, That the *Creatures shall be delivered into the Liberty of the children of God*; that is, that they shall be delivered in like manner as *Gods children* are delivered. But *Gods children* are not delivered by *annihilation and abolition*, and turning into nothing; but by *transmutation and alteration*, and *renovation*. By continuing still their substance and being to them, and altering only their qualities, and manner of subsistence. And so the Scripture still exhibits it and represents it to us, as *1 Cor. 15. 54, 55. The dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, &c.* And so again, *Phil. 3. 21. Who shall change our vile body, that it may be made like to his glorious body, &c.* It is not annihilated, but changed: And so it shall be also with the other Creatures.

Fourthly, It is not probable neither, that such a *special monument of Gods Power*, as the *Heavens and Earth* indeed are, should be *absolutely and totally abolished*, and turned into nothing; but rather that they should still remain as *so many Pillars of his Greatness and Goodness to all eternity*, as they prove to be in their excellent *Variety*.

Lastly,

Lastly, If all these things should be resolved into *nothing*, and wholly destroyed and taken away, there would be no place left for the Devils, and Reprobated men: For they cannot be in *Heaven*, as too holy and happy a place for them; and they shall not themselves also be annihilated and deprived of their being; therefore it must needs follow, that there be some place still abiding for them, which is assigned to them. These and the like, are such considerations as do make against the annihilating of the Creatures.

Now the Arguments which are brought for it, are chiefly these: First, That of Job 14. 12. Where it is said, *That man lyeth down, and riseth not till the Heavens be no more.* Therefore it seems that theres a cessation of the being of them. But for this we must know thus much, That the *Heavens* are here said to be *no more*: not in an absolute sense, but in a relative. *No more*; that is, no more in that present state in which they now are, but translated to a better and higher condition. Thus we find the phrase used, Psal. 39. 13. *O spare me, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence, and be no more.* David does not mean that he should be no more, as being wholly annihilated; but, that he should be no more; as to that manner of being and subsistence, which he had now here in the world. And so here in this place, *Till the Heavens be no more*; it is not to be understood of a simple non-entity, but of a qualified; not, *No more this*; but, *No more thus*: As we say of a man who is much alter'd, whether in body or mind, *That he is not the same man as he was.* *Ego non sum Ego.*

Another Argument is taken out of Psal. 102. 26. Where it is said of the Heavens, that they shall *perish*, and shall all of them wax old as a garment. And again, Esay 34. 4. Where it is said, *That the Host of Heaven shall fall down, as a leaf from the Vine, and a Fig from the Fig-tree.* Now perishing, and fading, and falling away, do seem to note annihilation in them.

But to this Argument, we return thus much, That these and the like expressions are not to be taken *Actualiter*, but *Dispositivè*; nor they do not so much conclude the Creatures *Actual extinction or abolition*, as rather their *disposition*, and *natural tendency thereunto*, considered in themselves. The Creatures being left to themselves, and according to their *own Principles*, without the power of God sustaining and upholding them, are indeed lyable to *annihilation*; but it does not from hence follow, that they shall be indeed absolutely annihilated: *They shall perish, but thou shalt endure*; that is, God is in his own nature eternal, unchangeable, and that abides for ever. But the Creatures, they are mutable and dissoluble, and subject to destruction. It is God alone, that essentially and originally hath immortality in him.

The third and chiefest is that place in Peter, 2 Pet. 3. 10; where it is said, *That the Heaven shall pass away with a great noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat: The earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up.* Now they that shall suffer this, they seem from hence to be devoted to *abolition and utter destruction*. But this can no way be inferr'd from these expressions. *The Element shall melt*, not so as to be brought to *nothing*, but to be changed in *form and quality*: As mettall which is melted, though it loses the fashion of it, yet the substance of it is still retained.

retained. The Earth shall be burnt, not in a way of *Deſtruction*, but in a way of *Purgation*. It ſhall paſs through the Fire to *refine it*, not to *conſume* it and take it away; or if to burn up any thing in it, it is only ſuch things as are in the nature of dross unto it.

And thus much of the first Opinion, which makes this Deliverance of the Creature to be by way of *Abolition or Annihilation*, and *absolute turning of it into nothing*, which we have ſeen in the *inconsistency* of it, and *unſutableneſs* to *Scripture and Reason*.

The ſecond Opinion, is that which makes this Deliverance of the Creature to conſiſt, not in *abolition*, but in *alteration*; not in *deſtroying* of the *ſubſtance of it*, but only in *changing of the qualities*: And this hath full as Great and Eminent Authors for it as the other, and it is that which ſeems to be moſt *conſonant and agreeable* to truth it ſelf. It is very evident here from this Text which we have now in hand, which does plainly make for it, while it informs us (as I have ſhewed) that the Creature *ſhall be delivered into the Glorious Liberty of Gods children*, which could not poſſibly be, unleſs it were *continued* ſtill in being, as *capable of ſuch a Deliverance*.

It is alſo very ſutable to the manner of the worlds changing by *water*. As that by *Water*, ſo this alſo by *Fire*: But that by *Water* was a change, not *ſubſtantiſhly*, but only in ſome *circumſtances*, and ſo it ſhall likewiſe be *proportionably* in this by *Fire*.

It may further alſo appear from the Analogy of the Apoſtle *Peters* Argument, 2 Pet. 3. 11, 14; who from hence does perſwade us to *holineſs and newneſs of obedience, and converſation*; becauſe there ſhall be *new Heavens, and a new Earth*. Look as they, though the ſame for *ſubſtance*, yet are changed for *quality*; ſo in like manner does it behove and become us to be.

Laſtly, The Scripture it ſelf does expreſſly call it a *Reſtauration*, Act. 3. 22, *Until the times of the Reſtitution of all things*. And again in the 29th verſe of the ſame Chapter, *The times of Refreshing from the preſence of the Lord*. Refreshing and Reſtitution do ſpeak no more but change and *renovation*.

Now admitting this to be the ſenſe of the Text, which we have now given of it; here's a further queſtion which may be demanded concerning the number of thoſe Creatures which ſhall be thus delivered. For ſome *Divines*, and eſpecially the *Schoolmen*, are of this Opinion; That *ſome of the Creatures ſhall be aboliſh'd*, and ſome *only reſtored*; that is, that the Heavens and Earth ſhall *remain in a qualified condition*; but that the reſt of the Creatures ſhall *perish*, and be altogether *deſtroyed*.

But this doth not ſeem to be ſo likely or *probable*, upon theſe following grounds: Firſt, From the expreſſion in the Text, the Creature *indefinitely, ſine finem*. The whole Creation; that is, the whole frame of Heaven and Earth, with what is contain'd in them, as we have already expreſſed it. Secondly, Thoſe Creatures ſhall be reſtored to *liberty*, which are ſubjected to *vanity*: But now *all kinds of Creatures* are under the *bondage of Corruption*, and through the ſin of man made *vain*; and therefore ſhall all kinds of Creatures likewiſe be delivered into a condition of freedom. Thirdly, To ſuppoſe the *abiding of the Heaven and Earth*, the *perishing* of the other Creatures, is to erect and ſet up a fair and

and stately building without an *Inhabitant* to be put into it, or to have a large and wide house and dwelling, without any Furniture or Ornaments in it; which is not so suitable to God's dealings in other matters.

The result then of all is this, That the *Creatures* at the last day shall abide in being; and that in *every kind and species* of them, which shall be restored to their first Condition, and deliver'd from their contracted Corruption. All the whole Creation shall be put in *statu quo*, and reduced to that Integrity and Perfection which was at first bestowed upon it.

But shall the *Fowls, and Beasts, and Fishes, and such Creatures* as these be thus restored, as we now speak of it? To this I answer, That so far forth as we may gather from *Scripture*, and speak modestly of things of this nature, it is very probable they shall. But still with this limitation, that they shall not be all restored for their *Individuals*, but onely some of each of them, for their *kinds*. I say, they shall not be all restored for their *Individuals*; as if every particular Creature which ever had been should be again: For this were to hold a *Resurrection of the bodies* of the Beasts, which we have no ground out of *Scripture* for; nor any reason agreeable to *Scripture*, as enforcing it to be so. But that some of every kind of the several Creatures which shall remain alive, and in being at the day of Judgment, shall be still preserv'd and restored to the integrity of their first Creation. This is that which we hold and deliver, as probable and likely so to be; where there are two things considerable, as branches of this assertion: First, That some Creatures of all kinds shall be preserv'd and restored. And secondly, That onely some; and not all: all specifically, but not all individually; all the Creation for kind, but not all that kind.

First, There shall be some Creatures preserv'd of every kind. This is clear; First, From what we noted before in the Text, *Every Creature*; that is, all those Creatures which were subject to the bondage of Corruption. Now these were all of every kind, therefore these shall in their kinds be restored, that there may be some proportion betwixt the one, and the other.

Secondly, So many kinds of Creatures as were good, and in a state of Perfection at their first Creation, so many shall also be recovered and set right at the Day of the Resurrection. Now there were of all sorts that were so, and so also which shall be so: God's latter Works shall not be less perfect then his first, which were all very good.

Thirdly, From the analogy and proportion between the World (as I said) changed by fire, and chang'd by water. In the World, chang'd by water, there was a preservation of all kind of Creatures in Noah's Ark. The same may be conceived as probable in the Restitution of all things hereafter at the Day of Judgment, and that suitable to the drift of this Text.

Now, if it should be further ask'd, To what use and purpose they should serve? As for this, it being a matter of secrecy, and which the Lord hath not discover'd to us, we are not curiously to inquire into it. He that first made them, knows abundantly how to imply them: And if he will have them to remain but as Monuments of his former Power, and Wisdom, and Goodness, which he hath shewen in the world, this is

enough, though they were nothing else in it. That's the first Branch of our Assertion, *That all the Creatures for their kinds shall be preserved.*

The second is this, That only *some* of them of every kind, and not *all Individuals*. This is that which we observe further; and we do it especially against such kind of persons, who from this present place of Scripture would very fondly and absurdly infer a *Resurrection of Beasts*. This does not follow from the Text, neither has any other good foundation for it.

First, It does not follow from the Text, where it is said, The Creature shall be delivered, because by the Creature, it is sufficient to understand *some* Creature of every kind. All particulars are not necessarily included; look as in the time of the Deluge, when the Creature was preserv'd from drowning, God thought it enough and sufficient to keep so many of every kind in the Ark, though the rest were destroy'd. So here, as to this time of *Restoration*, it is enough and sufficient that all kinds of the Creature are perfected, though many, yea most of the Particulars and Individuals are extinguished.

Secondly, For the thing it self, there's no use or necessity of it neither: That all particular *Beasts* should be restored and preserv'd as men are; There being not that ground for the one as there is for the other; and that in this Explication, because namely, particular men they do come under a particular Decree and purpose of God about them, which the other Creatures do not. All the several men and women in the world, which either are, or have been, or shall be, they are expressly and particularly design'd to such an end; that is, either to be Vessels of Wrath, or Vessels of Glory: To Salvation, or else to Destruction. And God has determined to deal with them in a judiciary way, that is, to call them to an account for their Deeds, and to pass a Sentence either of *Condemnation* or *Absolution* upon them. Therefore it is requisite that all these should rise again, and remain in their distinct persons: But now for *Beasts*, and other Creatures, there's no such thing which is belonging to them as a ground of this matter.

In fine, To sum up all, and to close up this present passage of the Text before us; *Of the Creatures being deliver'd into the glorious liberty of the Children of God.* This Expression may be taken three manner of ways: First, *Contemporane*. Secondly, *Causally*. And thirdly, *Terminative*. Contemporane, as denoting the time of this Deliverance. Causally, as denoting the occasion of this Deliverance. Terminatively, as denoting the thing it self.

First, Take it *Contemporane*; The Creature shall be deliver'd into the glorious liberty of God's Children; that is, the Creature shall be deliver'd at the glorious liberty of God's Children; when God's Children shall be deliver'd for their parts, then shall the Creatures be deliver'd also for theirs. This is a very good sense and meaning of it, and agrees very well with the Context; where it is said, That they do wait for the manifestation of the Sons of God: They wait for that blessed time, as that which shall be the time of their own accomplishment and perfection.

Secondly, Take it *Causally*, The Creature shall be deliver'd into the glorious liberty of God's Children; that is, the Creature shall be deli-

deliver'd for the glorious liberty of God's Children; as being put for as, as St. Chrysostom, who understood *his own Language*, seems to carry it. And there's a good truth in *this* also, as we have formerly declared: That the deliverance of the Children of God from *their bondage* of Corruption is an *occasion* to the other Creatures for their deliverance from *theirs*, which for *their sakes* is bestowed upon them.

Thirdly, Take it *Terminative*; The Creature shall be deliver'd into the glorious liberty of the Children; that is, the Creature shall *proportionably conform* to God's Children in their deliverance; that is, shall be deliver'd in *their kinds* as the other shall be *in theirs*, which is not by way of *annihilation and absolute extinction*, but only by way of *Change*. The meaning of it is not this, as if the Creatures were to be made partakers of the same liberty *in specie* with God's Children, but which is suitable and agreeable to their own proper *nature and being*. It is said of the Heavens, *That as a Vesture thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed*: Now a Vesture or Garment it is not changed by *burning*, but by *turning*; not by destroying the *matter or stuff* of it, but by altering of the *fashion and form*: and *so here*; This is God's way of *Reformation*, not to *abolish* things, but to *amend* them: He makes *new Heavens and new Earth*, not by taking them quite *away*, that they should not be *at all*; but by taking away the *corruptions* of them, that they may be after a better *manner* than they were *before*. Thus as plainly and briefly as I could, have I endeavour'd to explain and lay open this passage before us.

And now briefly to conclude with a word or two of *Use and Application*, which may be made of it.

First, Let us make that use of it which the *Scripture it self* teaches us to make, in 2 Pet. 3. 11. *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?* We should labour to be every day more and more fitted and prepared for that blessed and glorious condition which we are hereafter coming into, that we may be meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light: Be chang'd now.

In particular, it should work our hearts to a *spirit of mortification*, and deadness to earthly things; to *money and other treasures* and delights, the pomp and vanities of the world, because they being no part of the world, shall be *consum'd and burnt up with fire*; though the other Creatures shall only be chang'd, and for the substance of them continue still, as we have hitherto shewn.

Secondly, Here's matter of *Comfort, and Hope, and Consolation* to us: First, As to our *own future perfection* and consummation, both in Body and Soul, because the *Creature it self* shall be delivered. If God has this care of *them*, how much more of *us*? And if *they* shall be partakers of liberty, how much more shall *we* be of *glory*? especially considering *this* also, that *their liberty depends upon ours*; as it is also here intimated in the Text, as the reason why they *do long so much for it*.

Again, It is also comfortable, as to the state and condition of the *world*, and especially of the *Church* in those distractions, and confusions, and varieties, which it is here subject unto. The World, it is full of *uncertainty*, and there are *divers windings and turnings* of things in it *one way and the other*; sometimes things go *well* in it, and sometimes again

things go ill, and we are never, as we may say, in one fixt and constant estate. The Creature *rouls up and down* for a while, being subject to *vanity*; well, but there's a time a coming, when there shall be a full settlement of it, and all things shall be at last restored to their *primitive Excellency and Perfection*.

And so for particular *States, and Churches, and Societies*; the *confusions* which are sometimes in *them*, and the vanity which they are *subject unto*, who *do belong unto* them. These are such things as are *curable* and recoverable by *an higher hand*: He that can and *will* deliver the whole *Creation* in its time from the *bondage of Corruption*, and translate it into a *glorious liberty* and condition of *beauty*. He can and *will also*, as there is cause and occasion for it, deliver *any part* of the *Creation* from the *bondage of Affliction* in this World, and those several Evils, and Grievances, and Calamities, which for the present it is subject unto. And we should learn to strengthen our Faith in the *one*, from our Faith in the *other*.

Lastly, We see here the *great benefit* which we have by *Jesus Christ*, and our Redemption through *him*: In that he hath taken away *all the evil and mischief* which our sins have done unto us. Our sins have not only hurt *our selves* in our own persons, but they have also hurt and prejudiced the *Creatures* with us, and *for us*. And *Christ*, now he has not only freed *us* from bondage, but *them also*. As for *our sakes* they were made *subject* to vanity; so for *our sakes* they are also deliver'd from the *bondage of Corruption*. And this deliverance purchas'd by *Christ*. *Christ* has reconciled *us* to God; and by delivering us from the Power of Darkness, hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, as it is in *Col. 1. 13*. And *Christ* hath also reconciled *them* to God, whom he was angry with upon our account, and proportion'd them to the glorious liberty of the Children of God, as it is declared to us here in this Scripture. And this is further signified in *Eph. 1. 10*. *That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are in Earth, even in him: In whom we also have obtain'd an Inheritance*. And again, in *Col. 1. 19, 20*. *It pleased the Father by him to reconcile all things to himself by him. I say, whether they be things in Earth or things in Heaven*. Where we see, how the *Recovery, and Recollection, and Restitution, and Reconciliation of all things*, it is reduced and ascribed to *Christ*, as the proper Cause and Conveyance of it; who is therefore, with all humility and thankfulness, and affection, to be acknowledged of us in it.

So much for that; and so I have done with this whole present verse before us, *Because the Creature it self also shall be deliver'd from the bondage of Corruption, into, &c.*

 S E R M O N XXV.

R O M. 8. 22. And part of the 23. Verſe.

For we know that the whole Creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but our ſelves alſo.

There is nothing more uſeful and neceſſary for the thoughts and Meditations of Chriſtians, than the certainty of their future Condition in another World; and that Glory which ſhall be revealed in them. And accordingly this is that which is the Subject of the Apoſtle Paul's diſcourſe in the Scripture which we have now before us, which he does endeavour to make out and confirm from the deſires which are carried after it. And that as he here expreſſes it, and as we have formerly mention'd it in a twofold Specification; Firſt, In the Deſires of the Common Creature; and Secondly, In the Deſires of the New-Creature; Both of which are here exhibited to us, and joyn'd and coupled together in theſe two Verſes, which I have now read unto you. The Deſires of the Common Creature, that we have in the former verſe; For we know that, &c. The Deſires of the New Creature that we have in the latter. And not only they, but our ſelves.

We begin firſt of all with the former; to wit, the Deſires of the Common Creatures; which we have mentioned to us in the former Verſe. For the whole Creation groaneth and travaileth, &c.

IN the Text it ſelf there are three general Parts conſiderable; Firſt, The Creatures condition. Secondly, The Extent of it; and Thirdly, The Diſcovery; The Creatures condition, that's in theſe words, *The whole Creation groaneth and travelleth in pain together.* The Extent of it, *Until Now.* The diſcovery of it, *We know it.*

We begin with the firſt of theſe parts, viz. The Creatures condition, which is further expreſs'd in two branches more; firſt, in its Paſſion; and ſecondly, in its Compaſſion. Its paſſion is in this; that it groaneth and travelleth in pain; It's Compaſſion, that it doth it together.

First, To ſpeak of the Former, viz. The Creature's Paſſion, It groaneth and travelleth in pain: Theſe words are Metaphorical Expreſſions, like that of earneſt expectation in the verſe before, and they are attributed to the Creature in a borrowed and improper ſignification; The one taken from a man which has upon him ſome heavy burden which he deſires to be caſed of, and freed from: And the other taken from a Woman which

which longs for the time of *her Delivery*: from both of them taken together, we have a *very full and emphatical expression* of the Creatures Estate and Condition, in the time of *this present world*; which is such as is full of *miserie, and perplexity, and distraction*. All the Creatures, they *lie under pain and sorrow*, occasionally from the *Sin of Man*. And this they may be conceived to do in *undry respects*. As first, from that *hard labour* which they are put to for the *use of Man*. We see, how the *Creatures* do indure very much for *us* now and then in *this* regard. The *Ox*, and the *Ass*, and the *Horse*, and such as these, they groan under the *pains and travails*, which they undergo for our *accommodation*.

Especially Secondly, when they are made *Instruments* to man for his *Sinning*, as sometimes they are; there are divers *Creatures* in the world, which people *chuse* to the *fulfilling* of their *lusts*; their *pride*, and *luxury*, and *wantonness*, and *malice*, and *revenge*. Now in this respect, amongst others, they cannot but be subject to a great deal of *trouble* and *vexation*.

And then Thirdly, as in their *service* of us, so likewise, which we may take in with it, their *dying* for our *use* likewise. This is another part of *grief* upon the *Creature*, to have its *life* taken away from it for our *sustenance*, and *nourishment*, and *food*; to be exposed (as many *Creatures* are) to a *violent death* for our *sakes*, and sometimes a *cruel one*. This is *one thing* which it *groans* under, and is exceedingly *burden'd* withall, we must think that the *life of the Creature* is, in its *kind*, as *sweet* unto it, as *ours* is to *us*; and it is as *unwilling* to be deprived of it. But now when it is forced, thus to be, for *our use*, this must needs prove very *grievous* and *irksome* to it, and a part of that *miserie* which is upon it.

This should, by the way, teach us all *pitifulness* and *tenderness* to them in this regard, when we take the *life of the Creatures* away from them, not to do it without some kind of *reluctancy* and *melting* in us, whiles we think, that for *our sakes*, they should indure so much *evil* and *miserie*, as indeed they prove to do.

To this we may likewise add some *other Evils* which are pertinent hereunto. As the *Diseases* which grow in their *Bodies*, and that *violence* which they are subject unto from *without*, these are such things which they do likewise groan under, and in their *kind*, do complain of.

Lastly, The *great disorder* and *confusion* of all things here below, it does speak thus much unto us, The *whole Creation* *travails* and *groans*; that is, the *whole frame* and *composure* of the world, being a world of *Trouble*. We see what a *Resistance* there is betwixt *Creature* and *Creature*; and how many *Calamities* this *Life* is exposed unto from it, why this now is that which makes up to us the *Creatures* *grieving* and *groaning*.

And this *groaning*, it does not so rest in it *self*, but it is carried to a *further end*, namely, to make the *Creature* desirous of a *better* and *happier condition*, when it shall be freed from its present *bondage*. Therefore there is added to it another word, which signifies *Travail*. There are many that *groan*, and complain of that *evil* which they have no hope to be freed from: But this *groaning* of the *Creature* is not so;

It

It is a groaning in *Hope*, like the groaning of a *Child-bearing Woman*, that expects not only deliverance, but a *Child* with it, and the greater joy following upon it. Such are those groanings of the Creature under their present misery, as having attending upon them the Hopes of future Liberty.

The *main Use* which we are to make of this *groaning* which at present lyes upon the Creature, is still to make us sensible and apprehensive of the *heavy burden* and grievousness of *Sin*. We see what a weight is upon *that*, and how heavy the *wrath of God* is, which is express'd against it; namely, such, as in a manner makes the very *Fabrick* of Heaven and Earth to *crack*. The whole *world* is ready as it were to sink and fall under the *burden of it*. And those Creatures which never had any share in *Sin* it self, yet have a share in the *punishment* of it, and suffer from it. This is a point which is not lightly to be past over by us; but to be seriously *heeded*, as being not only a matter of *Notion* or *Speculation*, but also of *reality*.

Again, it teaches us also to take notice of Gods hand, when it is at any time upon our selves, and accordingly to be affected with it. It is that which the Prophet *Esay* layes to the charge of some People; that when *Gods hand is lifted up against them*, yet they *will not see*, *Esay* 26.11. they *harden* themselves against Gods Corrections, and have no regard at all unto them. Now let such as those here learn from the Creature, who being in *misery*, groan under that misery in which they are. And so much may suffice of the *first* thing considerable of us here in this Verse which is the Creatures *Passion*.

The second is its *Compassion*. It groans and travails in pain together, *συμπασιζει εν κοινω*. Whereby is signified to us the sympathizing Affection of the Creatures which they do sustain in this present Condition. And it carries a double reference with it; First, To us *Men and Women* who have the ordering and governing of them they have a sympathy with us. Secondly, To the rest of the Creatures which are of the same nature and condition with Christians; they have a sympathy one with another.

First, Take it in the *first Reference*; The Creatures they do groan and travail in pain together; that is, they do so with us, who have the *Lordship and Dominion* over them. They do sympathize and have a special fellow-feeling of our present Condition; and that again, according to a *twofold* Explication of it; First, in respect of our *sin*; and Secondly, in respect of our *misery*.

First, The Creature groans and travails together under our *sin*. Take notice of *that*, the very *unreasonable* Creature it self, it does in a sort lament and bewail the *sin of Man*; This is express'd unto us in *Jer.* 12.4. *How long shall the Land mourn, and the Herbs of every field wither for the wickedness of them that dwell therein? The Beasts are consumed, and the Birds, because they said, He shall not see our last end; that is, for their security, and senselessness of Gods Providence.* So *Hos.* 4.3. Speaking of divers sins which were amongst them, as *swearing, and lying, and killing*, and such as these. He adds, *Therefore shall the Land mourn, and everyone that dwells therein shall languish with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of the Heaven.* These very Creatures mourn within for our sins.

This

This they do out of *that Impression* which is upon them of *tenderneſs* of the *Glory of God* which they have Principles in them carrying them to, to promote it all they can. The *Creatures* they do *deſire* to their utmost, *that God may be glorified*; and ſo on the otherſide, are *grieved* where he is diſhonour'd, and do *expresſ* their grief in *their kind*, and as *capable* of it.

This, it ſhews how much it *concerns us to mourn* and to grieve for it our *ſelves*, if the dumb and poor unreaſonable Creature hath ſuch an *inſtinct* put into it by *God* as to groan and lament under *the Sin and Transgreſſion of man*; how much more does it lye upon *man himſelf* to be affected with it, and to lay it to heart? Surely ſo far forth as we are any thing, that which we ſhould be, it will be thus with us, as we ſee it was with *Paul himſelf*, *Rom. 7. 24.* He cries out there in a *vehement manner*, and as one who was grievouſly burden'd, *Oh wretched man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from this Body of death!* And ſo *David*, *Pſal. 38. 3, 4.* *There is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh, becauſe of thine anger, neither is there any reſt in my bones, becauſe of my ſin; for mine iniquities are gone over mine head, as an heavy burden, which are too heavy for me.* This hath been the ſenſe and apprehenſion which gracious perſons have had, of ſin in themſelves, who have *mourned and groaned* under it, as the greateſt evil that could poſſibly befall them here in this world; and which was moſt of all to be lamented by them, as indeed it is. There are a great many of People in the world that *find no weight in their ſins at all*, nor feel the *heavineſs and burdenſomneſs* of them; but ſet lightly and eaſily *by them*. But the reaſon of it is indeed *this*, becauſe they are *overwhelmed with them*, and dead and buried in them. *Dead men*, they feel nothing, though it be never ſo heavy, becauſe they want that which ſhould fit them and diſpoſe them thereunto, which is a principle of Natural Life, and ſo it is proportionably with ſuch perſons as are dead in *Treſpaſſes and Sins*; and which have no *Spiritual life in them neither*.

Again, Sin is *their proper Element*, and ſuch as is *moſt natural to them*; and from hence it is alſo that they *feel no weightineſs in it*: As we may obſerve concerning the *Water*, that it is not heavy in its *proper place*; take a bucket of water out of the *River*, and ye ſhall find a *weightineſs in it*; but let a man have never ſo much water upon him whiles he is in the *River*, and he feels no *burdenſomneſs in it at all*; an whole Sea and Ocean of water is in ſuch a caſe nothing to him. Even ſo is it likewise here in *this Particular*; as for a Righteous perſon, and a true Believer, and Child of God, to ſuch an one ſin is very weighty and burdenſom, as being out of its proper place; but to a worldling and wicked man it is no ſuch matter, becauſe it is indeed in its *Center*, and he likewise in his *proper Element*, whiles he is committing of it; that which is *natural*, is *delightful*; whereas that which is *præternatural* is *diſtaſteful*.

Again, As this ſympathizing of the Creature with us in Sin teaches us to lament and bewail ſin in *our ſelves*; ſo it teaches us alſo proportionably to bewail ſin in others, and to have the ſame Affections for them in *their Sins*, as the Creatures have for us in *ours*. This has been in like manner the gracious temper and diſpoſition of Gods Servants upon ſuch occaſions; as *David*, His eyes ran down with rivers of water, becauſe

because men kept not *Gods Law*. He beheld the Transgressors, and was grieved because they kept not *Gods Word*, *Psal. 119. 136. 158.* *Jeremy* wept in secret for their pride; And *Lot's Soul* was vext in him for their filthy conversation. And that's the first part of the *Creatures* sympathy with us; as they groan together with us for our sins.

The second is their sympathy with us in our misery, and not only with us, but with one another; we will here joyn them both together: The *Second* reference added to the first, which is here observable of us; as intimated to us in this expression of their groaning and *travailing together*. The *Creatures* they are not only sensible of their own particular and proper bondage; but also of the Bondage of each other, and of us to our selves, Of the Bondage of one another, *Hos. 2. 21.* The *Heavens* hear the complaints of the *Earth*, and the *Earth* hears the complaints of the *Corn*, and *Wine*, and *Oyle*, &c. of the Bondage and Misery of us men. Thus the *Sun* was darkned by way of sympathy, at the passion of *Christ*. And *Joel 1. 18.* in the time of the excessive drought, How do the *Beasts* groan, the *Herds of Cattel* are perplexed, as making our case to be their own.

This, it serves to shew the senselessness, and hard-heartedness of many *Men* and *Christians* in this particular, as wanting this fellow-feeling of the miseries and afflictions of their Brethren; and that sympathizing affection towards them, as indeed should be in them. Most people, if they be any thing well themselves, they little care what becomes of others. They can behold them in misery, and be little moved or affected towards them: As the *Priest* and the *Levite* in the Gospel, towards the man that fell among *Thieves*, and was stript and wounded by them; It is said, that they each of them look'd upon him, and passed by on the other side; namely, as such persons who were nothing at all concern'd in his condition. This is the temper of many others in such cases as these are: They can hear of the troubles and calamities of *Gods Servants* in such and such places, and because themselves do not personally feel them, therefore little or nothing regard them, or trouble themselves with them. Thus the Prophet *Amos* complain'd of some people that lived in his time, in *Amos 6. 6.* They drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments, but are not grieved for the affliction of *Joseph*. And so *Esay 57. 1.* The *Righteous* perisheth, and no man lays it to heart. There are not those Bowels, and sympathies, and compassions, and commiserations, which should be in *Men*, and especially in *Christians* one towards another. What do we speak of this, when as oftentimes there is rather the quite contrary, while people are so far from sympathy and tenderness of affection, as that they rather harden themselves with other resolutions; so far from compassionating others miseries, as that they rather sometimes rejoyce in them, and insult and triumph over them. And where the Lord is but a little displeased, they help and set forward the Affliction, as it is *Zech. 1. 15.* And so now I have done with the first general observable in this Verse, and that is the *Creatures* condition, which is express'd in two distinct Branches. Its Passion, and its Compassion; Groaneth and travaileth together.

The Second is the Extent of it, *Until now*; that is, from the first fall of man to this present day. This shews us the long continuance of this

Vanity and Misery upon the Creature. The Apostle Paul hath the like expression of himself, and the rest of his Brethren, 1 Cor. 4. 11. *Even unto this present hour, We both hunger and thirst, &c.* It is a Note, and Expression of Continuance both there and here. This Misery which the Creature does thus groan and travail under, hath been a long time upon it. It was long when the Apostle mention'd it; but it is now a great while longer, being many hundred years added unto it, and it will hold and continue still to the day of Judgment: As long as there's sin in the world, so long there will be also this of the Creatures groaning and travelling. It came at first into the world with it, and so is likely still to continue.

This, it serves to satisfy and to compose and quiet our minds in all the Evils which here in this world we are subject and exposed unto, as no new or strange matter. *Think not strange of the fiery trial which is to try you, as if some strange thing happened unto you;* as the Apostle Peter speaks, 1 Pet. 4. 12. For these things they have been continually, in all ages and generations of the world to this present day; and so are still to be expected.

The Third and last thing, is the Discovery of it; in these words, *We know it. Know it?* How? First, By the Word of God, which does signify as much to us concerning it; and so we know it, even by Divine Revelation. Secondly, By common sense, and daily, and frequent observation; as that which is continually offer'd and presented to our view; which we cannot but take notice of. And then Thirdly, which is the worst knowledge of all, we know it by woful Experience; as our selves are contributing hereunto by our own miscarriages; We are the chiefest causes of this Vanity which is fallen upon the Creatures, and consequently of its groaning and travelling; what evil does in this respect happen to them, they may thank us for it; who therefore know it thus with a witness. But this has in part been handled by us heretofore out of the 20th. Verse of this Chapter, and therefore we shall no further at this time proceed in it.

Ver. 23. *And not only they, but, &c.* These words are a further Argument, which the Apostle Paul here brings to the Romans to confirm the former Conclusion; to wit, that there is a future Glory to be revealed hereafter in the Saints. This he had proved already from the earnest desire and expectation of the Creature. But here now he does further confirm it, from that desire which is in Believers themselves. And not only they, but we, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we our selves, &c. Wherein (as in the former) we have two general parts; First, The Persons mention'd. Secondly, The Actions, which are attributed unto these Persons. The persons mention'd, *We our selves.* The Actions which are attributed to these persons *Groaning and waiting.* We begin with the first of these parts, viz. The persons mention'd, *We our selves, who have, &c.* Some there are, who understand by these Persons the Apostles only, who in the day of Pentecost, received the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost; but this seems not so probable, because St. Paul here writing to the Romans, joyns them together with himself in this business, which Romans had not received such extraordinary gifts as these were: Besides

Besides that what follows afterwards in the whole Context, and coherence of the words relates to such things as are common to all *true Christians and Believers*; who are therefore accordingly included in this expression which we have here before us. And there are *three* main Points which are exhibited to us in this *present Description*. First, that all *true Christians*, more or less, have received the Spirit. Secondly, That this Spirit which *Believers* have received, it is in them in the Nature of *first-fruits*. Thirdly, That though they have received the Spirit, or *because* they have received the Spirit, yet, and therefore, they *do groan and wait*.

First, All *true Christians* whatsoever, they have more or less received the Spirit; not the Spirit in the *miraculous* gifts of it, but the Spirit in the *sanctifying*, which is that which is here intended. A *Christian* is described, not so much from his *Gifts*, as from his *Graces*, which are most *essential* to him. This is that which we find *oftentimes* in Scripture to be declared of *such kind of Persons*. Thus in the 15th. Verse of this present Chapter. They are said to have received the Spirit of Adoption, 1 Cor. 2. 12. *We have received not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God.* And 2 Cor. 1. 22. *Who hath also sealed us, and given us the Earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.* And Eph. 1. 13. *In whom, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of Promise.*

This the Children of God come to be partakers of upon a twofold account. First, By virtue of Gods Covenant made with them in Christ. Secondly, By virtue of that Union which they have to Christ.

First, By virtue of Gods Covenant made with them in Christ: This is a part of the New Covenant. The giving of the Holy Spirit to those Persons with whom it is made. Thus Esay 44. 3. *I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground, I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine Off-spring.* So Ezek. 11. 19. *I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you.* And again, Ezek. 36. 27. *I will put my spirit within you; and will cause you to walk in my Statutes, &c.*

Secondly, By virtue of their near and close Union to Christ, who is their Head. He hath received the spirit without measure himself in his own Person: and of his fulness do we all receive Grace for Grace. Look as the Members of a Natural Body, they do partake of the same Life which is in their Head; Even so also do the Members of Christ partake of the same life which is in him. He that is joyned to the Lord, is one Spirit, as it is in 2 Cor. 6. 17. And Eph. 4. 7. *Unto every one of us is given Grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.*

This may therefore serve as a Tryal and Discovery of our state and condition. We may see what we are, according to this character now before us, as it is fasten'd and imprinted upon us. All would be counted Saints, and Believers, and the children of God, and the Members of Christ; now let them examine and consider how it is with them in this particular: *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*; as the Apostle tells us in the Ninth Verse of this present Chapter; Therefore let us look to this, whether or no, we have got the Spirit: And that (remember still) not only in the common gifts of it, but in the saving; a man may have the Spirit in the former sense in a great abundance; in Wit,

and knowledge, and utterance, and common illumination, and such as these; and yet in the mean time he no more than an *Hypocrite* and *Cast-away* for all that. But it is the other which makes men to be true and sound *Christians*; faith, and patience, and self-denial, and humility, and Heavenly-mindedness, and love, and the like. These are the fruits and effects of that spirit which does intitle us to *Christ*, which is a purging and renewing Spirit, which casts out that which is dross, and filth, and corruption in us, and does in some measure conform us to him, whose Spirit it is. That's the first Point; All true Christians whatsoever, they have more or less received the Spirit.

The second Point is this; That the Spirit of God in Believers, is in them in the nature of *First-fruits*. The *First-fruits* of the Spirit, as it is here express'd: This it is both in regard of the *Graces* of it, and also in regard of the *comforts*; and according to each of them, in divers and sundry resemblances, as pertinent thereunto.

First, In regard of the Order, and Beginning, and first appearance of them: The *First-fruits* of the Earth are those fruits which the Earth first of all produces, In Deut. 26. 2. Thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the Earth, which thou shalt bring of thy Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it into a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name there. And thus now are the *Graces of the Spirit of God* in Believers call'd the first fruits, as those which are first of all wrought by the same Spirit of God in them. We have not the following accomplishments of *Glory*, till we have received the first fruits of *Grace*; These must go before the other, and first of all shew themselves in us.

Therefore they do exceedingly mistake and deceive themselves, who preposterously invert this Method, and think first of all to begin with *Glory* and *Eternal life*; No, it is no such matter. The first thing that God does for us, is to bestow his *Grace* and Spirit upon us. There must be *Holiness*, before there can be *Happiness*; There must be *Grace* before there can be *Glory*; the first fruits are here in this life. That's one account of this Expression.

Secondly, In regard of their Quantity; that is their smallness and imperfection; we know, how the first fruits under the Law, they were but an handful in comparison of the whole, but a small and little portion. Even so is it here in these things, which we now speak of *Grace*, it is here but a little; and comfort here, it is but small; We have not these things in the fullest and largest measure, but sparingly communicated to us. Therefore the Kingdom of Heaven is sometimes compared to a grain of Mustard-seed, which is the least of all seeds, though when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs. And that which is here express'd by first fruits, is in other places express'd by an Earnest, which though it be part of the bargain; yet is but little in comparison of the whole; so the Spirit, in the Work and Graces thereof, is but little in regard of that fulness which we shall have in Heaven.

Therefore we should not be discouraged or disanimated, and put out of heart, when we reflect upon our selves or others, which are near unto us in this particular, God will not cast away the first fruits, which himself hath wrought in us: Though *Grace* be but small, yet it is *Grace* for

for all that, and a fruit of his own blessed Spirit, which he will not refuse or reject, but rather make much of it. According to that expression of the Prophet, *Esay 65. 8. Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the Cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for there is a blessing in it: so will I do for my Servants sake, that I may not destroy them all.* God is tender of the first beginnings of Grace in us, and so should we be of it in our selves and others, whom we have to deal withall, where there is the truth and sincerity of them.

This is not so to be understood, as if we should rest our selves satisfied with these, so as to endeavour no further; we must not be alwayes in our first Elements, and beginnings of Goodness; No, but we must labour to come up to Perfection, and to proceed from one measure and degree of Grace to another. We must not be alwayes in our entrances, but go forward, and make a further progress in the wayes of Religion: Beginnings are well for Beginners, but not for such as are long standers in Christianity. Here we must take example by the Apostle Paul himself, who has given us a good pattern to this purpose in his own particular, *Phil. 3. 13, Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect, but I follow after, &c. And forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

Thirdly, In regard of their signification: The Graces and Comforts of the Spirit of God here in this life; They are Pledges to us of that eternal Glory which we shall one day more fully partake of in the Kingdom of Heaven. As the first fruits which the Jews offer'd to God, they were an evidence to them, that in due time they should receive a good crop of the rest. God gives us these things for the present, as a forerunner of our future Inheritance.

This is matter of great comfort and encouragement to the Children of God, who find these things in themselves upon their own experience. The beginnings of Grace and Comfort, they are not only sweet in themselves, in regard of present sense and feeling; but they are sweet likewise in their reflection, and as to that which is following upon them; so as those that for the present enjoy them, may certainly expect greater things after them. The First-Fruits be-speak the full Vintage, and is a Pawn and Pledge of all that is consequent to them: Hence Christ is said to be the First-Fruits of them that sleep, because his Resurrection from the dead was a fore-runner of the Resurrection of the bodies of all his Members; so are the beginnings of Grace here, of the accomplishments of Glory hereafter.

Fourthly, In regard of their quality; The First-Fruits they are commonly, and for the most part, the best and choicest, so are the Graces and Comforts of the Spirit above any thing else: Above Parts, above Gifts, above Riches, above all outward Excellency: *The merchandise thereof is better then the merchandise of Silver, and the gain thereof then fine gold. She is more precious then Rubies: and all the things that thou canst desire are not to be compared thereunto, Prov. 3. 14, 15.*

Therefore accordingly we should esteem of them, and of such persons as partake of them; that is, to have high and working thoughts and apprehensions of them. Grace, it is the most excellent way: And so it is call'd,

call'd ; 1 Cor. 12. 31. *And the Righteous is more excellent then his Neighbour*, Prov. 12. 26. Those who are regenerate and begotten again by the Word of Truth, they are said to be a kind of *First-Fruits of Gods Creatures*, in James 1. 18. And those which follow the Lamb, they are said to be *redeemed from men, and the first-fruits unto God*, Rev. 14. 4. *Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the first-fruits of his increase*, Jer. 2. 3.

Fifthly, In regard of their *influence* ; The *first-fruits* they *sanctified the rest*, as in Rom. 11. 16. *If the first-fruits be holy, the Lump is also holy*. Even so does Grace every thing else which at any time comes from us : It puts an *excellency and loveliness* upon it. *Mens Parts, and Estates, and Employments* ; All they are, and all they have, and all they do ; It is all sanctified by Grace, and made *well-pleasing* and acceptable to God. As a good Christian is careful to express Grace in every thing, and thereby to make a *difference* betwixt himself and another ; so does that Grace which is in a Christian, and is *expressed* by him, set a greater *luster* upon him, and make him more *amiable*. It teaches him how to *improve*, and to make a good *use* of every thing ; and it makes every thing which comes from him to have the better *savour* and *relish* with it.

Lastly, In regard of their *Dedication* ; The *first-fruits* were consecrated to God, and given to Him ; so should all the *Gifts and Graces* of Gods Spirit which he bestows upon us, we should *devote* them, and consecrate them, and improve to his *Honour and Glory*. We should have the Lord with the *first-fruits*, not only of our *Riches*, but of our *Graces* ; and with the *increase*, not only of our *temporal Substance*, but of our *spiritual*, as to whom it properly belongs. And indeed the more we have of it, the more we shall do it : The more Grace that any man has, the more will he use that Grace which he has to Gods *Honour and Glory*, and the advancement of him, who has bestowed that Grace upon him. And that's the second Part here observable, That the Spirit of God in Believers is in them, in the nature of First-fruits.

The third and last is this, That those who have received the first-fruits of the Spirit, they *do long and wait for more*, even the full accomplishment of that which is begun in them. This we have declared to us in sundry places of Scripture, as Psal. 42. 1, 2, *As the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, even for the living God, O when shall I come and appear before God*. So in 2 Cor. 5. 2, 9, *For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from Heaven. If so being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life*. Thus Peter in the Transfiguration, *Master, it is good for us to be here*, Matth. 17. 4.

There are two things which are observable in this Proposition : First, That the *first-fruits* of the Spirit which Believers do partake of in this world, they do not *stay* their longing, or *prevent* such desires as these in them. Secondly, That the *first-fruits* of the Spirit which Believers do partake of in this world, they do so much the more *increase* their longing, and make them more *eager* then before.

First,

First, I say, These first-fruits of the Spirit, they do *not stay* their longing, and *satisfie* them: This appears by the manner of the Apostles expressing of himself in this Scripture; We, *even we our selves*, by way of *reflexion and reduplication*: As who should say, There might indeed seem reason to some why the brut and unreasonable Creatures should wait and look, and long for such a time of deliverance as this is, because *they* have nothing else but grief and travail in the mean time, and nothing besides whereby to *satisfie* them; nay, but not only *they* which are in these circumstances, but also our selves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, who have some beginnings of Glory already; who have somewhat in hand to *fill* us, yet *even we* groan likewise, &c. So that we may observe from hence thus much, That the Children of God, they are not satisfied with their beginnings of Heaven here; though it be a mercy, and a very great priviledge to them, that they have such beginnings, and that now whiles they are not seeing but believing, *they rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory*, as the Apostle Peter sometimes speaks; yet this, it does not *content* them to have no more then this bestowed upon them.

The reason of it is this, Because they are *but small and imperfect*: Look as there is a great deal of difference betwixt the first-fruits and the full Vintage, betwixt the Gleanings and the full Harvest. Even so is there also betwixt these longings of Grace and Comfort which Gods Servants do partake of in this life, compared with what they shall enjoy in the world to come.

This, it serves therefore with other things, to wean Gods Children from the world, and to make them so much the more willing to *leave it*, and to part with it when their time comes; because this is not a place of full and absolute *contentment* to them, neither one way nor other. It is not a place of full contentment to them in regard of *Temporals*, because there is no such contentment in the *things themselves* consider'd in their own *nature*. And it is not a place of full contentment to them in regard of *Spirituals* neither, because though there be contentment in the *things themselves* simply consider'd, yet there is not in regard of their *measure and degree* of injoyment, who have them here but very scantily and sparingly, communicated to them over what they shall hereafter partake of; and that's the first branch of the Proposition. These first-fruits they do not *stay* their longing.

The *second* is, That they do further *increase*, and make them more *eager*. The more that Christians do partake of the Comforts of the Holy Ghost *in this world*, the more earnestly do they desire the accomplishments of Glory in the World to come.

And there's a double reason for it: First, Because the things themselves have so much sweetness and delightfulness in them: For the Children of God they thus *argue and reason* with themselves. If the *first-fruits* be thus comfortable, what then are the *fuller injoyments*? If there be so *much sweetness* in the exercise of *Holiness*, in the peace of *Conscience*, in the assurance of *Pardon*, in the hopes of *Heaven*; what is there then in the full fruition of God himself? If so much sweetness in this *weak and imperfect Communion with God* in his Ordinances, what is there then in more near approaches to Him, and in beholding of Him face to face.

Secondly,

Secondly, Their *Appetite it self* is from hence so much the more increased; and thereby more enabled to favour and relish these heavenly delights: Their *mouths* are hereby put in taste, as I may so express it. Look as any have more of the world, they oftentimes prove more worldly, and contract to themselves an earthly and worldly spirit, whereby they do so much the more favour and desire the things of the world. Even so on the other side, the more that any have of *Grace, and Holiness, and Comfort, and these first-fruits* of the Spirit; the more are their hearts carried out after Heaven and heavenly things.

This, it serves to give us an account therefore of the temper of mens spirits in this particular. We see whence it is that many people are no more raised and enlarg'd in themselves with such desires as these are; no more breathing and longing after Heaven, and that blessed and glorious Estate which God has provided and prepared for his Servants in another world. It is because they have no more praguistations and pre-apprehensions of these things in themselves; which if they had, they would be otherwise affected. If people had more of Heaven in themselves, they would more desire themselves to be in him, and would not rest or be satisfied in themselves, till they were indeed come to that blessed place. An Heir that has some sprinklings of his Fathers bounty aforehand, he is not quiet till he has the full Inheritance; and so it would be with Christians in this particular. It is mens ignorance, and senselessness, and unapprehension of better things, which deadens their affections to them. We know how it was with St. Paul, who had been taken up into Heaven aforehand, and had there heard unspeakable words, which it is not possible for a man to utter, there was now no keeping him out of it, when he came back from it, but he still long'd till he was there again. He desired to depart, and to be with Christ, and to be absent from the body, that he might be present with the Lord: And so is it likewise in a proportion with such Christians who have the First-fruits of the Spirit, and the beginnings of Heaven here in the anticipations of future Glory. They groan and wait, and earnestly long for that condition, upon which account they are described by such persons as do love the appearing of Jesus Christ, and that do wait for his coming, as that season wherein these things shall be accomplished unto them.

And we cannot wonder at it, if we consider seriously of it, that it should be so; because as the Apostle tells us in the 5th verse of this Chapter, *They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the Flesh; and they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit.* Mens desires are conformable to their Dispositions, and Employments, and Exercises, and such things as they are most conversant and occupied about. And so it is here. What's the reason that the brut Beasts do not desire the perfections of Men, because they have not principles in them futable to such perfections? And the same reason is there also why worldlings do not desire the perfections of Christians, because they have not in them Christian and spiritual principles which might lead them and carry them thereunto. And so now I have done with the first general of the second, viz. The persons mention'd, not only they but our selves, who have the First-fruits of the Spirit; even we our selves.

The second is, the actions attributed unto those persons, *Groan within our selves; Waiting, &c.*

 S E R M O N XXVI.

R O M. 8. 23.

And not only they, but our selves also, who have the First-fruits of the Spirit, even we our selves groan within our selves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

As all the Truths in Religion do require our special belief and perswasion of them; so those especially above the rest, which are most Essential and Fundamental. Those Points which are of the greatest consequence, do call for the greatest evidences, and assurance and demonstration of them to us: And especially as they are any thing liable to the cavils, and exceptions, and contradictions of evil Persons. Now such is this which we have now before us here in this Scripture, concerning the Glorious manifestation of the Sons of God, and future Deliverance from the bondage of Corruption which is upon them. It is a Doctrine of very great importance and influence as any other besides. And therefore does the Apostle Paul in this Text which we have still in hand, endeavour to settle the Romans, and in them all other Christians, in the truth and certainty of it. And he labours to do it (as I have formerly declared unto you) from a two-fold Argument: The one as taken from the natural desires of the Creature in the 19th verse of this Chapter: The earnest expectation of the Creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God, &c. And the other as taken from the spiritual desires of Believers, and Christians themselves. Forasmuch as the former argument might seem to be too low, and mean, and insufficient, which was taken from the common Creature, The Birds and Beasts, and Fabrick of Heaven and Earth: He therefore adds another from the new Creature, The Saints and Servants of God themselves, which have received the First-fruits of the Spirit. And these here described from a two-fold Action which is attributed to them: The one of groaning, we groan within our selves: And the other of waiting, Waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of our body.

THe second general Part of this verse consists in the *Actions* attributed to the foremention'd Persons, which are here exprest to be of two sorts: The one is *groaning*, *We groan within our selves*. And the other is *waiting*, *Waiting for the adoption*, to wit, the redemption of our body.

D d d

First,

First, To speak of the former, and that is *groaning*, which is here again considerable *two* manner of wayes: First, In the *simple Passion*. And secondly, In the *additional illustration*. The *simple Passion*, that is, *we groan*: The *additional illustration*, that is, *within our selves*.

First, For the *simple Passion*, we groan: Where that which we may observe from it is this, That even the *Children of God themselves*, they do sigh, and mourn, and groan, while they abide here in the World: We, sayes the Apostle Paul of himself, and believing *Romans*, and all other Christians; Even we our selves do groan. Thus also 2 Cor. 5. 4, *We that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened, &c. All my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee*, sayes David in *psal.* 38. 9. And it is recorded of the Children of Israel, *Exod.* 2. 23, 24, *That they sighed and cryed, and their cry came up unto God by reason of their bondage: And God heard their groaning.*

There are *two* things especially which are the ground and occasion of this *groaning*, whereof we now speak, in the Children of God; and that is Sin and Misery: They groan under each of these burdens: First, The burden of *sin*, they groan under that: This made Paul himself to groan, *Rom.* 7. 24. *Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death.* This also made David to groan, *psal.* 38. 4, *When he complain'd that his iniquities were a burden too heavy for him.* There are *two* things in *sin* which are matter of groaning to God's people; The *stain* of it, and the *guilt* of it: The *stain* of it, so far forth as it does defile them, and fill them with *noisomeness*; and the *guilt* of it, so far forth as it does expose them, and (of it self) binds them over to *punishment*.

First, The *stain and defilement* of sin; this is that which does much burden the Servants of God, while they are here in the *Flesh*, and does cause them to groan: Other men may groan under the *punishment* of sin, but Gods Children groan under the *defilements*. The sin that dwells in them, and the Corruption that does so easily beset them; this is grievous and troublesome to them: And it is so in *sundry* particulars, which are considerable of us to this purpose.

First, The *proneness and inclination* to evil which is in the heart; The Servants of God find this too much in themselves, as Paul, *Rom.* 7. 22, *I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.* In regard of the unregenerate part, and the remainders of corruption in them which are as yet unmortified; there are great propensities in them to sin, which does much afflict them; not only the *acts* of sin, but the *lusts* of it; these are grievous to a gracious heart. It is a burden to a good Christian to have that in him which does but dispose him to evil, though by the Grace of God he be prevented from the commission and acting of it.

And so secondly, As *proneness to Evil*; so on the other side, *indisposedness to Good*; when he finds he's averse to any thing which God requires of him, this is also troublesome to him; as we see it was to Paul, That the good which he would do he did not, as well as that the evil which he would not, he did.

Thirdly, *Distraction* in Duty, and weakness and imperfection of *Performance*: Those which are the Children of God, they are troubled at this,

this, That they serve God no better then they do, nor are more lively and chearful in his Service. As a good and ingenuous Child, when his Father bids him to lift any thing, he cries when he cannot *do it* as he would : Thus also do the Children of God.

Lastly, The sins of *daily incursion*, as we commonly call them, for distinctions sake, in opposition to greater miscarriages: These slips and failings which we fall into before we are aware in every business. As there is nothing whatsoever we undertake, when we do it as well as we can do, but there will some sinfulness or other stick and adhere unto it, not only as coming short of the *rule*, but also moreover by the addition of some positive evil to it. That there should be in them such a fountain of corruption continually running in them; *this* is that which is very grievous to the Saints and Servants of God, and a burden too heavy for them.

The consideration of this Point may be variously useful to us: First, As a note of *Discovery* and *Trial*, what we are in our selves; we may from hence in part discern and distinguish our own *condition and state in Grace*; whether or no we are such as have *receiv'd the First-fruits of the Spirit*: we see here the disposition of such Persons, by *this description* which is here given of them, namely, as of such as do *groan*, and that especially under the burden of *sin* and corruption which is in them. Therefore those that *rejoyce* in evil, and *delight* in it, and close with it, and have little or no apprehension of the wofulness and grievousness of it, they do hereby plainly discover themselves to be none of this number. Certainly, if thou beest one who hast *the Spirit of God in thee*, or any workings or beginnings of it; The Spirit of *Adoption*, and the Spirit of *Regeneration*, thou wilt then *grieve* and *groan* under sin, and it will be an heavy burden to thee; yea, and that not only *greater and grosser* sins, such sins as all men abhor by the very light of Nature; but even *lesser and smaller infirmities*, as the world may reckon them; such as *these* will be *burthensome* to thee, and thou wilt not be satisfied or contented with thy self, so far forth as thou art guilty of them.

What shall we think then of those, whom not only such things as *these*, but even greater do never *affect nor go to their heart*, which can live in a course of Wantonness, and Drunkenness, and Covetousness, and Profaneness, and such sins as *these* are, and not once *be moved for them*; which can live as *jocundly*, and *merrily*, and *pleasantly*, under such courses and wayes as *these* are, as if they were the *innocentest* persons that were in the world, and had no guilt at all upon them; yea, which are so far from mourning under them, as that they rather *glory* in them, and *boast* of them; And as *Solomon* observes of *Fools*, *make a mock of sin*: Certainly such as *these* are in a sad condition, however they may be affected in themselves; *Woe unto them that laugh, for they shall weep.*

Secondly, Seeing God's Children do thus *groan* under their sins, let then all men take heed how they do at any time upbraid them with them. There are some ill-condition'd persons in the world, who if they observe never so little weakness or infirmity in any of the *Servants* of God, will either be reviling them for it to others, or

else objecting of it to *themselves*, and hitting them in the teeth with it: Now what is this, but as we may say, to add grief to the *afflicted*. Thou canst not so much condemn a Child of God for any sin which is in him, as he is ready to condemn himself, when it is discover'd & discern'd by him: And therefore this is a sordid and unworthy practise in any, not that such persons are not to be reprov'd where they do amiss, but they should not be upbraided with such weaknesses as are apparently burdens to *themselves*.

Thirdly, This serves to confute that Opinion which prevails with some kind of people, as if a justifi'd person were exempted from all grief for sin; and therefore they cannot perswade themselves to a *confession and acknowledgment of sin*, as thinking it too *legal* a business, and not agreeable to those that live under the times of the Gospel, and which partake of *liberty by Christ*; such as these are confuted from this Point which we have now before us, *Of the Children of God groaning under their present Corruptions*.

But secondly, As the Servants of God groan under sin in the *stain* of it, and so far forth as it *defiles*; so likewise under the guilt of it, and so far forth as it exposes to *punishment*. For this we must take notice of to this purpose, That although *there be no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*, who are *actually* freed from wrath in regard of their persons. Yet they have not this alwayes so *certified and assured* unto them in their *particular Consciences*, but do sometimes very much doubt of it, and call it into *question*: And *this* is a great part of their *burden*, and an occasion of groaning to them. They groan under *spiritual desertion*, & the *arrows of the Almighty* which are in them: This makes God's dearest Servants themselves to *groan heavily*, according to that of the Psalmist, in Psal. 39. 11, *When thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth*, &c. It will pull down the *highest spirit*. This was that which David groan'd under, when he complain'd of the *broken bones*; yea, not only groan'd but *roar'd*, as we have it in Psal. 38. 8, *I am feeble, and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart*. So Job and others, &c. That's the first ground and occasion of this groaning in God's people, which is taken from *Sin*.

The *second* is taken from *misery* and the affliction which they meet with here likewise: This is that which the best of God's Servants while they are here are subject unto; and none indeed so much as *they*. Thus the Children of Israel, it is said, That God *repented of their groanings*, to wit, which are caused from their *Afflictions*, by reason of them that *oppressed them*, Judges 2. 18. So Job, Chap. 23. 2, *To day is my complaint bitter, my stroke is heavier then my groaning*. And Hezekiah, *Like a Crane, or Swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a Dove: O Lord, I am oppressed*, &c. Esay 38. 14.

This proceeds, First, From the consideration of their *common Nature*; They are made of flesh and blood as *other men* are, and so consequently subject to the same affections and passions with them. This is the account which Job himself seems to give of it, Chap. 6. 12, *Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh made of brass?* &c. God's Children have in them sense and feeling, and therefore are *affected with afflictions*.

Secondly, It proceeds also from *Grace*, forasmuch as they have a real appre-

apprehension of deliverance which belongs unto them. This is that which *puts* them upon *groaning* to be delivered, because by faith they know that there is one that *bears* their groans, and *takes notice* of them. Therefore here in the Text is this *groaning* joyn'd with *waiting*, as we shall see more afterward, we *groan* *waiting*. As the groaning of the *Creatures* is from a *natural* instinct in them, so is the groaning of the *Saints* in them from a *Spirit of Faith*, as knowing whom they have trusted, that *He is able to help them out*.

Thirdly, It is sometimes also from weakness and *want of Faith*, especially there, where it is in the *excess and extremity* of it. As there's a *natural* groaning, which does proceed from the *common* principles of *sense*: And as there's a *spiritual* groaning, which does proceed from the *special* principles of *faith*; so there's a *carnal* groaning also, which does proceed from the *corrupt* principles of sin and infirmity which is in us. And this is that which some of the *Saints* have now and then *been subject unto*; *Joh*, and *Jeremy*, and *Jonah*, and such as these; all these taken together do make good this truth unto us, *That the Children of God themselves do groan*, even *they* as well as other *Creatures* are involv'd in this expression.

This teaches them accordingly what to expect whiles they live here below: This World it is a vale of tears, wherein the best that are, are subject to sighing and groaning. Therefore we should not think strange of such things as these are, or be offended at them: It is that which has *always been*, and *always will be*, as long as the World *lasts*: Even *we our selves*, says the Apostle, as *good as we are*, yet this is *our lot and condition*; so that we may not judge of God's love and favour, according to such things as these are, *if we do, we may be mistaken*. It is a very good satisfaction, *this* in the reasonings of many people against *themselves*, who conclude that they are *none of Gods Children*, because they are in an *afflicted condition*: what? are God's people exempted from groaning while they are here below? surely no, by no means, but rather the contrary. Even *we our selves* (says the Apostle) *groan*.

Therefore secondly, It is a very good *Argument* to *wear us* from an *inordinate love* of these things here below; forasmuch as there is *so much sorrow* amongst them as it seems there is. The World it is a *place of groaning*, and the more that any have to do with it, the more are they *sensible of it*: There's no worldly thing whatsoever, but it has somewhat or other which does take from it: It has not only *Vanity*, but also *Vexation of spirit*, which is fasten'd upon it. *Riches*, How much groaning with *them*? And how much grief annex'd unto them, as the *concomitants of them*? Who have more cares, and griefs, and troubles, and perplexing and distracting thoughts, than those who have their greatest share and interest in them. It is hard to see whether there be not greater groaning *from* them, than groaning *for* them. The Apostle says expressly of them, That those that will be rich, they pierce themselves through with *many sorrows*, 1 Tim. 6. 10. And so *Honours*; How much disquiet in them, and what ado to keep them up and support them, and what a vexation to be cross'd in them? as we know it was with ambitious *Haman* when slighted by *Mordecai*; therefore they have their bitter farewell, and more of the sting oftentimes, than of the *Honey*: All which taken together, serves to moderate and qualify our affecti-

affections to such things as these are. And so much may suffice to have spoken of this Passion of the Children of God here in this world, as it is considerable in the simple Proposition, *We groan*.

The *second* is in the additional *illustration*. And that is in *our selves*. *in iustit*. Under which phrase and manner of Expression, we have divers things intimated to us, as concerning this *sighing and groaning* of the Children of God; *Three things* especially.

First, That it is *secret and hidden*, it is not *always discern'd*; we groan *in our selves*; that is, we groan *to our selves*. This groaning, it is such as *all men* are not sensible or apprehensive of, nor do take notice of it; That which is done *within* a man, it is done without the *privacy* of another, because no man knows the things of a man, save the Spirit of a man which is within him, as the Scripture tells us. Now such a kind of thing is this *groaning of Gods Children*. It is such as every one does not see or perceive. *The heart knows its own bitterness, and a stranger does not intermeddle with its joy*, in Prov. 14. 10. Look as the Joy of Gods Children, it is such as the World does not reach, it is *hidden*, which no man knows saving he that receiveth it: Even so is it also with their grief; *Other men* do not *always observe it*; They groan *within themselves*; that is, they groan in *secret*, which is many times the greatest groaning and groans of all; *Ille dolet vere, qui sine teste dolet*. *Other men* sometimes they make a great deal of noise and clamour, and heavy complaint; But for Gods Children, their grief is more private and retired, and reserved betwixt God and themselves. And this as in regard of affliction, so especially in regard of *sin*, whether their own, or others. Thus the Prophet *Jeremy*, cap. 13. 17. *My soul shall weep in secret for your pride*, &c. This is the Dispensation of Gods Children, to be mourning and humbling of themselves for the Sins and Miscarriages of others, while the Parties themselves that occasion it are little sensible or apprehensive of it. Thus does many a *Godly Parent* groan for the miscarriages of his Children. And thus does many a *Godly Minister* groan for the unprofitableness of his People. And thus may a *Godly Christian* groan for the iniquity of *the times*, and the abomination of the places wherein he lives. These are things which are not obvious to every eye, but which *themselves* know the meaning of, and are acquainted with.

This, it proceeds from a kind of *Modesty* in them, as in all things else as futable and agreeable to the principles of Religion. They *Pray* in secret, and *give* in secret, and *grieve* in secret, as wicked men do according to this sense, *sin* within themselves; that is, allow and indulge themselves in private and close miscarriages; so do *Godly men groan* within themselves upon such occasions.

The Use which we may make of this Observation, is to improve it so much the more to our own greater vigilancy, and attention, and care, and regard of them *in their griefs*. It is the manner of the World, sometimes it may be, to be somewhat affected, where there's a great deal of complaint. There's many a poor Christian in the world that groans in secret, and within himself, which few or none have a regard unto, although very much deserving. Therefore there's very good use sometimes of inquiring into the state of poor people, and of listning to know how it is with them, whiles their Modesty makes their groaning

to be more reserv'd. Those that are well and prosperous themselves, they little know or are aware of the sad condition of many of Gods dear Children and Servants, which do in this sense groan within themselves.

But yet further, it is some comfort that God himself does regard them, and take notices of them: *All their desire is before him, and their groaning it is not hid from Him*, in the place before cited. He tells their Sighs, and he bottles their Tears, and he books their Complaints. That's the first thing imply'd in this Expression, *Within our selves*; that is, to our selves, *privately and in secret*.

The Second, is *heartly and serious*. In our selves, that is, from our selves. The groanings of Gods Children they are not slight, or perfunctory, or superficial; but such as proceed from a deep sense and apprehension of their misery, and the condition in which they are: According to that Expression of the Prophet *Jeremy*, in Cap. 4. 19. *My Bowels, my Bowels, I am pained at my very heart: my heart maketh a noise within me, I cannot hold my peace*. There is sometime an affected and customary kind of groaning, which many people take up to themselves, while their hearts are little toucht with any thing which might be the true ground of mourning to them. This is that which God regards not, neither do Gods Children so much give themselves to it, as *having an odiousness and loathsomeness* in it. No, but the groanings of the Servants of God, they are *real, and sincere, and intire*; not false, or fantastical, or hypocritical: *In themselves*, that is, *from themselves*. That's the second.

The third thing imply'd in this Expression, is the *propriety* or peculiarity of their Grief; *In our selves*, that is, *by our selves*. Gods Children they have such a *grieving and groaning* as none have but such as they are: As they have a *joy* which none have but *themselves*, so they have a *Grief* likewise. There's some kind of grieving and groaning which is proper to *Religion it self*, and which is to be found no where else besides; which none are acquainted with, but those who are acquainted with *Christianity*, and with the *life and power of Godliness*. This is another thing which we may take notice of in this Expression, when it said, *We groan within our selves*; that is, within our own compass, and in our own capacity. We groan, not only as *Beasts* do, which are acted only by *common sense*; nor we do not groan only as *Men* do, which are acted only by *natural reason*; but we groan moreover as *Christians*, which are acted by *Religion and Grace*, and so have a grief in that respect which is proper unto them.

This peculiarity of grief, and so consequently of groaning in Gods Children, is founded in these Considerations.

First, Their peculiarity of *Employment*, they have such *businesses* wherein they are exercis'd, as none have but they. *Peculiar Employments* they breed *peculiar distractions and cumbrances*, which are attendant upon them, because they have still some *miscarriage* which these are liable unto; and *miscarriage* it is a cause of grief. Now Gods Children they have other businesses and employments then other men have, and which they seriously give themselves too: They have reading, and hearing, and praying, and meditating, and communicating, mortifying
of

of their lusts, keeping of their hearts in frame, fruitfulness in their places, and stations, and relations: These, and the like, are such things as are to be done by them; and when they come not off so roundly, and freely, and successfully, as they would do in them, it is a grief and trouble to them. Take other men in the world which do *mind none of these matters*, and they suffer no grief at all from them, nor are affected in them: If but their trading and worldly imployment does any thing thrive, and go on with success, they have no more wherewith to trouble themselves.

Secondly, Peculiarity of *contentment*; every different comfort has a different grief annexed unto it, either in the deprival or straitning of it. The more delights that any man has in any condition, the *more crosses* is he likewise subject unto *from* that condition, when these delights shall either be suspended and interrupted to him, or removed and taken away from him; why thus is it now in *Christianity*, and in the business of *Religion*. The Children of God, they therefore *grieve* by themselves, because indeed they *joy* by themselves: and none knows but he that *suffers* it, what belongs to their *sorrow*, because none knows but he that *receives* it, what belongs to their *comfort*; As peace of Conscience, joy in *believing*, sweetness in *Duty*, and fellowship and communion with God in his Ordinances, the light of his Countenance, &c. Carnal and worldly-minded persons which are acquainted with none of these Contentments, they are not sensible of the contrary *perplexities and sadnesses* which are answerable to them; so they enjoy but their *Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, and these outward things*, they are not troubled for any thing else in the want of it, and wonder that *any others should be so besides*.

Thirdly, Peculiarity of *design*; they have proper and peculiar ends and aims which they propound to *themselves*: Look as any mens *desires* are, the *more oftentimes* are their griefs, because desire and hope disappointed, it makes the heart *sad*. Now God's Children they have their peculiar *desires*, and aims and ends; As the *glory of God*, the good of the Church, the flourishing of Piety and Religion in the times and places wherein they live. The crossing of which unto them, is an occasion of greater grief in them.

The Use of this Point may be this, To take men off from condemning God's people for a mopish and melancholy Generation, and such as *grieve and groan* there, where there is no cause for them to do so. Alas, such as those who thus censure them, they do not know what belongs thereunto: For the *grief of God's Children*, it is *peculiar* and proper *only to themselves*; none can judge of the *griefs* of Christians, but those which understand the *grounds* of Christians, and who are acquainted with the state and condition which is pertinent and belonging unto them, which men of the world are wholly to seek in, and ignorant of: If they were not, they would have *other* thoughts in this particular; neither doth this therefore any thing make for the disparagement of Christianity it self, as some persons are ready sometimes to reason from it. If God's Children have grief by themselves, which none else have besides; why then (perhaps may some here say) it is good to be none of that number, but to keep still where we are in our unregenerate condition: If
this

this be the fruits of the Spirit, to occasion us so much the more perplexity, let *us save our selves* so much grief and sorrow.

Not so neither; For first of all, As a Christian has peculiar *Grief*, so he has peculiar joy and comfort which attends it, and is concomitant to it, and makes it up: Therefore he has proper *sorrow*, because indeed he has proper *comfort*.

Again secondly, This *proper grief* of a Christian is a *cause* of greater *comfort* to him: His *joy* is not only joyn'd with his *sorrow*, but flows from it; according to that of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 7. 10, *Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of: whereas the sorrow of the world worketh death, &c.* That's the second thing observable in this passage, *viz.* The additional illustration, *We groan in our selves*; that is, *to our selves*; as *secret from our selves*, as *sincere by our selves*, as *proper or peculiar*. And so now I have done with the *first action* attributed to Believers here in this Text, and that is *groaning*, with the amplification of it; *We our selves groan within our selves*.

The second thing here attributed to the Godly and true Christians, is *waiting*, in these words, *Waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of the Body*. Where we have two things exhibited to us, as expressing the *present temper and disposition* of the Children of God: First, Their *patient and contented forbearance*; They wait, that is, they stay God's time for the performance and accomplishment of their Redemption, without murmuring or repining. Secondly, Their *longing and earnest desire*; They wait, that is, they *expect* and look for this *blessed and happy season*.

First, It is an expression of *their patience*; They wait, that is, they *stay*: From whence we may observe thus much, That God's People are so far sensible of the evils which are upon them here in this life, as that withall they are *patient* under them, and willing to stay God's time and leisure for their freedom and deliverance from them: We *groan*, but yet withall we *wait*. Thus 2 Cor. 4. 8, *We are troubled on every side, but not distressed: we are perplex'd, but not in despair*.

The ground hereof is first of all this in the Text, Because they have received the First-fruits of the Spirit; which though (as I have formerly shewn) they do not altogether *satisfie* them, yet they do at least very much *qualifie* them, and occasion this *patience* to them.

Secondly, Because they have a *spirit of Faith*, whereby they see all those things which do at present *befall* them, working *good unto them*, and God bringing this good out of them; this it makes them to be the more *patient* and *contented*.

Thirdly, A *spirit of love* and respect to the rest of their Brethren, for whose sakes these evils are yet continued, and not taken off; that those who are elected, may from hence have an opportunity to be converted: Christ's delaying of his coming, it is *Salvation*, as the Apostle Peter has declared unto us, in 2 Pet. 3. 9, & 15. That's *one* thing implied in this *waiting*, namely, *patience* and *contentation*.

The *second* is *desire* and *longing*, and *earnest expectation*: God's Children they do *wait* for their Redemption; that is, they do *look* and *long* for it. They do *servently pant* and *breath* after the *second coming* of Christ. Thus Tit. 2. 13, *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious*

E c c appear-

appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. So 2 Pet. 3. 12, Looking for, and hastning unto the coming of the Day of God. And the Apostle Paul commends the Corinthians, that they came behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of Christ, in 1 Cor. 1. 7. This desire which is in the Servants of God to this purpose, hath divers grounds for it.

First, Their present evils and afflictions. They wait, because they groan, as it is said before of the Creature in ver. 19, 20. of this Chapter. The earnest expectation of the Creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. Because the Creature is subject to Vanity: As it is a ground to the Creature, so it is likewise a ground to the Saints for this desire.

Secondly, Their present feelings and pre-apprehensions. They have received the first-fruits of the Spirit, as I shewed you before; and these beginnings upon them do so much the more augment and increase these desires in them.

Thirdly, Love to Christ. They desire it and long for it, as a Bride does for the coming of her Beloved. A good Christian longs for Christs coming, out of that respect which he bears to his person. Thus the spirit and the Bride say, Come.

Lastly, From the condition of a Believer in regard of Grace, which is here very weak and imperfect. Imperfection is full of desire, carrying it forth to that which may compleat it. Now thus it is with the soul of a Christian here in this world; it sees many weaknesses in it self, and so waits for Christs appearing, when all defects shall be removed and taken away from it, and all perfections and excellencies be bestowed upon it.

This waiting of the Saints thus declared, it is useful to sundry purposes to us:

First, For the intent to which it is brought here in the Text; and that is to assure us that there is such a thing indeed as this is, namely, a time for Christians Redemption from their present Bondage; and injoyment of a glorious Liberty which shall be bestowed upon them: This it does appear from hence, because the Children of God themselves do desire it. The force of the Argument lies thus, All right desires have their accomplishment; There is nothing which is rationally longed for, but it shall certainly come to pass. This is true both in Naturals and in Spirituals: In Naturals, it is true, as I have shewn, because the desire of the Creature is the work of God himself, who has put that desire into it: *Opus Creaturae, est opus Intelligentiae*. And in Spirituals, it is true more especially upon the same consideration likewise: All the grieving inclinations of a Believer being the infusions of the Spirit of God himself into him, and so do necessarily suppose that object which they are directed and carried unto.

Secondly, Here's a discovery of mens conditions what they are. Those who are indeed Gods Children, they do not only groan, but wait; not only mourn under present Misery, but also pant after future Glory, &c. A worldling is all for the present, and to have his Contentments here; but a Christian is not so satisfied. If he might have all the Comforts and Pleasures which the world is able to afford, in the full height and extent of them; yea, and that too with no sorrow at all intermingled with

with them, yet he would not take them for his hopes and expectations of a better world.

Therefore thirdly, Let this quicken us to this groaning, and heavenly disposition, and make us labour to find it in our selves: We should never think our selves *right* and well, and that which we should be, till we have this *affection*, whereof we now speak, wrought in us: And to bring our selves hereunto, let us take notice of these following Directions:

First, Seriously meditate on the *Vanity* of all these things *here below*: Consider the manifold Afflictions, and consider the manifold Temptations which we are here followed withall.

Secondly, Meditate on the *Glory* which is to be revealed, and the *excellency* of an heavenly condition; which though we cannot fully reach to and comprehend, yet we have some *glimpses* of it to us.

Thirdly, Desire God by his Spirit to set these things home here effectually upon us, and to enlarge these desires in us, as he is able to do.

There's but *one* thing more behind, and I have done: And that is the particular and explicit specification of the *Object* which this waiting is carried unto; And that is laid down two manner of wayes: First, In the general Proposition; And that is *Adoption*. Secondly, In the particular Exposition; And that is the *Redemption of the Body*.

First, For the *Object* propounded; And that is *Adoption*; *Adoption* in Scripture-Language, is of a various consideration, and is taken three manner of wayes:

First, For the *Adoption of Election*, whereby God before ever the foundations of the World were laid, did appoint us, and set us out to be in the number of his Sons and Daughters. And this is that which is mention'd in Ephes. 1. 5, *Having predestinated us to the adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his Will, to the praise of the Glory of his Grace*. This is that *Primitive Adoption*, which is the fountain of our eternal Salvation. Now as for *this*, the Children of God are not said to wait for it, as being indeed past upon themselves before themselves had any being in nature.

The *second* is the *Adoption of Vocation*, whereby we being effectually called by the preaching of the Gospel, and justified by Faith, are by the *Spirit of Adoption* incorporated into Jesus Christ, and confirm'd in the *Inheritance of Sons*. This at present we hold by Faith, Rom. 8. 15. Where it is said, *That we have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father*. And this is an evidence and manifestation of the former to us; but cannot be that neither, which God's Children are said here to wait for, being that they have it already.

The *third* is the *Adoption of Glory*, whereby we shall fully at last obtain the glorious Inheritance of Children together with Christ. And this is the *perfect and consummate manifestation* of both the other two, which is not now posselt or seen of us; but held by hope, and expected and waited for by God's Children, groaning under sin and affliction: *This is* that which is here intended in *this place*. The Point here obser-

Ecc 2 vable

vable is this, That besides the present Adoption which God's Children do partake of here in Grace, and the First-fruits of the Spirit, there is a further Adoption of Glory which shall one day be bestowed upon them in Heaven; *Waiting for the Adoption.* Thus 1 John 3. 2. *Beloved, now we are the Sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that when he appears, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is.*

Thus God will have it to be so, for the exercise of Faith in us, and likewise that we may be the better fitted and prepared for it. As an Heir that waits for the Inheritance, till the time appointed by the Father, Gal. 4. 1. *He hath made us meet to be partakers, &c. Col. 1. 12.*

Therefore we should accordingly in patience possess our Souls, and not expect our full happiness here: We must be content to wait for the Adoption; and we may very well do so, considering the excellency of it, when it shall come at last, and our present comforts in the First-fruits of the Spirit. And thus much of this Object, as it is considerable in its general proposition; *The Adoption.*

The second is the particular Exposition, to wit, *The Redemption of our Body.*

The Redemption, ἀπολύτρωσις.] This likewise, as well as that other term of Adoption, does admit of a different signification; either namely, as taken for the paying and laying down of the price, or else for the receiving of the thing it self for which the price is paid. The former of these is not waited for, but perform'd already, as Ephes. 1. 7. and Col. 1. 14, *In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, the forgiveness of Sins, &c. Redemption,* as it is taken meritoriously on Christs part, so it is already accomplisht: *He is of God made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification;* so also Redemption, 1 Cor. 1. 30. But being taken absolutely and compleatly, in regard of our full participation of it, so it is future, and as yet to come, and is waited for by us: And in this latter sense it is taken in this Scripture, *We wait for our Redemption,* that is, for our perfect deliverance from all sin and misery. Thus is the Phrase also used in some other places, as Luke 21. 28, *Lift up your Heads, for your Redemption draweth nigh.* And Ephes. 4. 30, *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of Redemption.*

Of our Body.] This is exprest, rather than of our souls: First, Because our souls are in their actual Redemption already before that time. The Souls of the Children of God are in the possession of Bliss and Glory, before the second coming of Christ; even as soon as ever they leave the Body, and depart out of the World: Which overthrowes two Errors at once, both of Popish Purgatory, and phantastical Psychopannochia.

Secondly, It is here said of the Body, *Signanter,* Because all Miseries and Afflictions in this life are conveyed to the whole man by the body; so that the Redemption of the Body, it is in effect the Redemption of the whole person.

That

That which we may more particularly observe here is this, That there is a Day a coming wherein the *bodies* of all the Saints, as well as their *souls*, shall be freed from Bondage and Corruption. Thus 1 Cor. 15. 43, *Sown in Dishonour, raised in Glory.* And verse 53, *This Corruption must put on Incorruption, &c.* 2 Cor. 5. 4, *Mortality swallowed up of life:* Phil. 3. 21, *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

Thus it follows upon these special Considerations:

First, As they are the *Instruments* of a sanctified and regenerate Soul, whereunto also they have been companions in duty.

Secondly, As *Members of Christ*, who is the Head, and redeemed before them: *Christ is risen from the Dead, and become the First-fruits of them that slept,* in 1 Cor. 15. 20.

Thirdly, As they are the *Temples of the Holy Ghost*, who still abides and dwells in them as his *own*, and accordingly will raise them, Rom. 8. 11, *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you: he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his spirit that dwelleth in you.*

Lastly, As together with the Soul, they do make up the whole person which God hath taken into Court with himself: This is our Saviour's Argument, Matth. 22. 32, *God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living.*

The consideration of this Truth is very comfortable to the Servants of God:

First, In all *corporal Infirmities* and Disparagements, which are incident to the Body here in this life, of Sickness and Distempers, and Restraint and Persecution, and the like. The Body though it be here in the World exposed to these, yet in time it shall be redeemed from them.

Secondly, As to the horreur of the Grave, and the dreadfull apprehensions of that from rottenness and putrefaction; our Bodies shall at last be freed from all Corruption: *I will redeem them from death: I will ransom them from the power of the Grave: O death, I will be thy Plagues: O Grave, I will be thy Destruction,* as it is in Hos. 13. 14.

Therefore let us be frequent and often in such Meditations as these are; They will make us *patient in suffering*, willing to expose our Bodies, and to venture them in the Work and Service of Christ; as it is noted of *Epaphroditus*, in Philip. 2. 30. We should think of this *Day of Jubilee*, as the Jewish Servants did of theirs.

But especially, in order hereunto, Labour to be such as have our Souls redeemed here from sin, and so in that sense partakers of the first Resurrection. Mark how the Apostle here sets it; He does not say, The Redemption of the Body indefinitely, and without limitation: No, but the Redemption of our Body precisely. Our Body. Whose Body is that? namely, The Body of the Saints and Believers, and the Servants of God. The Body of such Persons as he had mention'd

mention'd in the *beginning* of the verse, who had *received the Firſt-fruits of the Spirit*: It is *their Body*, and no bodies but *theirs* which is thus redeem'd.

And ſo now I have done with this *Object* in both the representations of it; both general and particular. In the general *Propoſition, The Adoption*: And in the particular *Expoſition, The Redemption of our Body*: And ſo with this whole 23^d verſe.

Now it follows afterwards in the 24th, *For we are ſaved by hope: but hope that is ſeen is not hope.*

S E R M O N.



SERMON XXVII.

R O M. 8. 24, 25.

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Those which are born to be rich Heirs in the World, and that have great Estates in Reversion, they please themselves, not only in their Possessions, but in their Expectations; not only to think what they are at such time as they are come to maturity, but likewise to think what they shall be, though they are at present under Age: And these thoughts do accordingly raise them in some measure above themselves. In like manner may we observe it to be also in the adopted Sons of God, who are so far forth the Heirs of Salvation, as they are first of all the Heirs of Promise, and do accordingly live in this time of their present Non-age upon the hopes of their future accomplishment and consummation. This is that which the Apostle Paul does declare to us in this present Scripture which we have still before us: Where having formerly mention'd the First-fruits of the Spirit, which Christians do already partake of in this present life, and their waiting for their further Redemption in another World, does make this to be a kind of beginning of salvation to them; For we are saved by hope, &c.

IN these two verses together, there are three general Parts observable of us: First, *The general Proposition, We are saved by hope.* Secondly, *The particular description of this Hope, what it is; But hope that is seen, is not hope.* Thirdly, *The Adjunct or Consequent of it; But if we hope for that we see not, then, &c.*

We begin with the first of these parts, viz. *The general Proposition, We are saved by hope.* This is the Point which lies here before us, to be taken notice of by us; That the present salvation of a Christian lies not so much in Possession, as it does in Expectation. The word Hope in Scripture does admit of a double signification; Either as it does denote the Grace of Hope, in reference to the person hoping; or else as it does denote the Object of Hope, in reference to the thing hoped for.

Now

Now here in the Text it seems especially to be understood of the latter, That *our Salvation* is such a thing, as is not presently enjoyed, but expected. And thus it is represented to us in other places, as *Act. 23. 6, Of the Hope and Resurrection of the Dead, am I called in question. Col. 1. 5, For the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven. Rom. 5. 2, We rejoyce in hope of the glory of God. And Tit. 3. 7, That being justified freely by his Grace, we should be made Heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

This may be further illustrated and confirmed unto us, from those Titles and Expressions which Salvation is frequently in Scripture set forth unto us by; As of an *Inheritance*, which those that are born to it are not presently in the possession of, but must wait the time appointed by the Father, *Gal. 4. 2. Of a Crown and Reward*, which is not presently received neither, but after precedent work and conflict. Of a *Prize*, which is not attain'd unto neither, but after the Race first of all finished. All these do speak this unto us, That our Salvation is indeed at present but in Hope.

This Consideration of this Point may be drawn forth into a various improvement: First, In a way of Confutation of our Adversaries the Papists, and that in two Points especially.

First, In their Doctrine concerning the Causes of Salvation, whereof they make Hope to be one; *We are saved by hope.* Therefore, say they, *is hope* that thing which procures our Salvation; and we are not justified by Faith only, but as well by Hope. But here we see how greatly and foully they do mistake in this matter, perverting the main and chief scope of the Spirit of God in this Scripture; which is not so much to shew unto us *what it is which saves us*, as rather to shew unto us the nature and condition of our Salvation, of what kind it is; namely, a thing not actually enjoyed, but only expected: So as that which we translate by hope, is not so much By, as it is In; neither has it reference so much to the Grace consider'd abstractly, and in it self, as rather indeed to the Object of it, which it is fastned upon, or to the state and condition of the person who hath this Grace bestowed upon him, and infused into him.

Secondly, In their Doctrine also concerning Assurance. This Text, it comes home to them here also, while they deny that it is possible for a Believer here in this life to be sure of his future Salvation. I say, they are confuted from this Scripture, where the Apostle sayes, *That we are saved by Hope. Forasmuch as hope* (as he tells us else-where) *it maketh not ashamed*; that is, it disappointeth not the party in whom it is of that which he expecteth; which it should do, if that the hope of future Glory in a Christian (who is the proper and only subject of this Hope) could be frustrated. Seeing therefore there is a certainty of hope (which even they themselves cannot deny; yea, sometimes yield and acknowledge in opposition to the certainty of Faith,) seeing there is this certainty of Hope, there must needs be likewise a certainty of Salvation which follows upon it. For while they speak of this certainty of Hope, either they mean a bare humane hope, which is founded upon meer conjectures and probabilities, and the discourse of humane reason; or they mean a Divine Hope, namely, such as is a Theological Vertue, and a Grace infused by the Spirit of God. If they mean only the former, and say, that the Children

Children of God are sure of Grace and remission of Sins, by such an hope as is merely humane; they do in this respect give nothing to Believers, but what is agreeable to Unbelievers also. If they mean the latter; namely, such an hope as is infus'd, and is a special Gift of the Spirit of God; then they must needs make it to be infallible, and incapable of Error; According to that saying of Durand, which is also one of their own, *Quod subest spei infusa non potest non evenire*; That which is the object of Divine and infused Hope, it is such as cannot but it must indeed come to pass.

A second Use of this Point is, as it does more nearly concern our selves, and that in sundry respects:

First, That we labour to find this hope in our selves; to be such as upon good considerations may comfortably assure our selves, that we shall one day be made partakers of *Eternal Life and Glory*. This is that which every one lays claim to, and many confidently persuade themselves of it: It will be our wisdom to be very well grounded and bottom'd in this particular, and to proceed upon a good foundation, that we may not be mistaken, nor ashamed of our Hope. This is discover'd and made known divers ways: By the root of it, as proceeding from Faith; which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, Heb. 11. 1. By the effects of it, as working in us an endeavour after the thing hoped for, and a Conversation suitable thereunto: He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as Christ is pure, 1 Joh. 3. 3. By the Concomitants of it, as Patience, care to please God, fear of offending him, boldness and courage for God, &c.

Secondly, We are from hence also taught to keep up this our hope from failing and decaying in us, and to strengthen our selves what we can in the conceiving of it. And here there are two things at once to be done by us: First, To confirm our selves in the hope of Christianity in general. And secondly, To strengthen our selves in our interest in this hope for our particular.

First, Seeing we are saved by hope, it concerns us (I say) to strengthen our selves in the hope of Christianity in general; namely, that there are such things indeed as a Christian does hope for. Thus St. Paul speaking of himself, Act. 24. 15, *I have hope towards God, which they themselves also know, that there shall be a Resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust*. And Act. 26. 6, 7, *And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise of God made unto our Fathers: For which hopes sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews, &c.* There is a general and common hope which is the scope and aim of all Believers that are in the World: This, it hath divers Appellations, which in Scripture are put upon it, whereby it is described; As the hope of Righteousness, Gal. 5. 5. The hope of Glory, Col. 1. 27. The hope of Salvation, 1 Thess. 5. 8. The hope of eternal life, Tit. 1. 2. And this is one thing to be settled in us: This it hath divers grounds and foundations for it, whereupon it is raised. As,

First, The Promise and Covenant of God, Esay 55. 3, *I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David*. It is a part of Gods Covenant with his people, to give them Grace here, and Glory hereafter: According to that of Christ to his Disciples, Luke 12. 32, *Fear not little Flock, it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom*.

F f f

Secondly,

Secondly, The Oath of God, Heb. 6. 18, *Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the Heirs of Promise the immutability of his Counsel, confirmed it by an Oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lye, we might have strong Consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope which is set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the Soul, sure and stedfast, and which entrencheth into that with-in the Vail.*

Thirdly, Christ himself in the performance of all his Offices; That's an other ground of our hope: Christ he is call'd *the hope of Glory*, Col. 1. 27. And so indeed he is, so far forth as he docs certify and assure us of *Glory to come* (and that there *is* such a thing indeed as *this is*) by his Death and Suffering, by his Resurrection and Ascension, by his Intercession at Gods right hand for us.

Lastly, The First-fruits of the Spirit, and the beginnings of Glory here in this World, which Christians have in their own Hearts and Consciences, they are great assurances of this hope unto them: Therefore is *the Spirit of God* so exprest and described unto us; As a *Witness*, as a *Seal*, as an *Earnest*, and such things as these: All which are matters of evidence and confirmation, which they carry in them in reference hereunto. That's one thing which we are to confirm our selves in, namely, in the hope of Christianity consider'd in general, that there is such a thing indeed as *this is*.

But secondly, Not only so, but further, we are to strengthen our selves in our own hope for our particular condition. That as there is such an hope as *this is* for the thing it self, so that we also have hope of this hope. Forasmuch as we are *saved by hope*, it concerns us very much to keep up hope alive in our selves; not only to have it in the ground of it, but also in the discovery.

How may we come to do so? Briefly thus, First, By *conscientious walking* and watchfulness over our selves: The more holiness, still the more hope: These things they run in a circle. Hope it provokes to holiness, and makes us to walk more warily: And holiness, it encourages hope, and makes us to walk more comfortably. The Righteous, hath hope in his death, saith Solomon, Prov. 14. 32. The Righteous by a special emphasis, as excluding any other besides; And in his death, the saddest time of all; when all others are void of hope, and when the expectation of the wicked shall perish.

To this I may add sincerity, and uprightness, and fruitfulness, in our places: The hope of the Hypocrite shall perish, Job 8. 13. When men deal falsely with God, and think to deceive him; he'll at last deal justly with them, and deceive them of what they look'd for from him; and also does sometimes stagger them in their own thoughts and apprehensions of them. The way to converse hopefully, is to converse fruitfully and sincerely.

Thirdly, By meditation on the Promises, and often looking over our Evidences and grounds of hope. The more we converse in the Scriptures, and with the Word of God, and our own Hearts, the better hope shall we conceive in our selves: Remember thy Word unto thy Servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope, Psal. 119. 49.

And lastly, by frequent prayer, and converse, and communion with God.

God. The more that we are acquainted with God, the more shall we hope from him: Psal. 62. 8, *Trust in him at a'l times ye people, pour out your heart before him.* Thus should we strengthen and confirm our hope for our own particular.

Yea further, we should not only nourish and strengthen this hope in our selves; But be ready likewise to give a reason, and an account of it to others. According to that of the Apostle Peter, 1 Pet. 3. 15. *Be ready alwayes to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.* Look as it is in other matters here in the world, men are ready, as there is occasion requir'd, to shew their Titles and Evidences for their Inheritances. Even so should they likewise do here, both to give a reason of Christian hope in general, and to evidence and demonstrate that there is such a thing indeed as that is; and likewise of their own hope in particular. That they are such as do upon good grounds challenge and lay a claim to this hope.

Lastly, Seeing we are saved by hope, as is here in this present Scripture declared unto us. This serves for the just reproof and taxation of three sorts of Persons: First, *Desperate*, which do exclude themselves from all hope at all. Secondly, *Presumptuous*, which do hope there, where there is no ground of hope for them. Thirdly, *Carnal*, which do place their hope in things of the world.

First, Such persons do plainly offend against this Doctrine, who are absolutely desperate and hopelesse. Forasmuch as we are saved by hope, in what a sad case and condition are they, which do cast themselves out of hope, and do shut up the Grace of God against themselves! We see from hence the great aggravation of the Sin of Despair; what a grievous and fearful sin it is, as that which is directly opposite and contrary to Salvation it self: We are saved by hope, therefore those which are void of hope, are consequently void of Salvation: Without hope, and without God, Ephes. 2. 12. This is that which divers people are sometimes guilty of, that will needs be damn'd and perish, as we may say, whether Christ will or no; refusing all his gracious offers and tenders of Salvation to them, and so judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life, as it is said of the Jews, Act. 13. 46. This is a sin of a very high nature in the whole latitude of it: It is an undervaluing of the Love of God the Father, who hath found a way and means for Salvation: It is a trespassing upon the Blood of Christ, who hath purchast Salvation for us: And it is also a disparagement to the Holy Ghost, whose Office is to comfort and to perswade us to come up to Christ's terms and conditions. In a word, we overthrow the whole scope and tenour of the Gospel, and the rule of God's Grace in it.

Secondly, *Presumptuous* persons, they are also from hence condemn'd, because we are saved by hope: For as despair is a trespass upon Hope on one hand, so is presumption likewise on another. Those therefore that take up an hope of their own making; who though they walk and continue in sinful courses, yet hope for all that they may come to Heaven and be saved; they do exceedingly deceive themselves, and shall one day find that they are far enough from it; and so much the farther, as they have thought themselves nearer to it. We are saved by hope, therefore we are not saved by presumption. Presumption is one thing, and hope is another,

as that which is *irregular* taking, and has substantial grounds for it.

Thirdly, *Carnal and worldly* persons, they come under this Censure likewise, from the consideration of this Point in hand, That *we are saved by hope* ; which is not such an hope as is founded in the things of the World, but in matters of an higher nature : We are begotten again to a lively hope, by the Resurrection of *Jesus Christ* from the dead, sayes the Apostle, 1 Pet. 1. 3. And an hope which is laid up for us in Heaven, sayes the Apostle Paul, Col. 1. 5. It is the condition of many people, That their portion is only in this World, as the Psalmist speaks of them, Psal. 17. 14. All their happiness it lies here below, and they rest themselves satisfied with it. Give them but their desires here, and take Heaven who will : Like profane Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his Birth-right, as it recorded of him, in Heb. 12. 16. Now what a sad estate are such persons as these in : If our hope be only in this life, we are of all men most miserable, sayes the Apostle in another place, 1 Cor. 15. 19. No, the hope of a Christian it is of another nature, and such as hath Salvation with it, which the hope of worldlings hath not : They are not saved by their hope, but destroy'd ; *Hoc ipsum quod sumus Christiani spei res est*, as Cyprian tells us. The very being of a Christian, it is a business and matter of hope, and his happiness it is founded in things which are out of his sight. It is hope reserv'd, as we find it call'd in the place before cited. And so now I have done with the first general Part of the Text, which is the general Proposition, exprest to us in these words, *We are saved by hope*.

For hope, &c. The second is the particular description of this Hope, what it is ; which is laid down Negatively, by denying it to be of such things as are seen ; but does include the Affirmative also in it, as being of such things as are not seen. The hope of a Believer, it is the constant and infallible expectation of good things to come : Let us take notice of that : It is not of things visible, but of things invisible. And thus we shall find the Scripture in other places to represent it unto us ; as 2 Cor. 4. 18. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are Eternal. So Heb. 11. 1. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen : In 2 Cor. 5. 7. We walk by Faith, and not by sight : In Col. 3. 3. Our life is hid with Christ in God : And 1 Joh. 3. 2. We are now the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be.

The ground hereof is not only the nature of hope it self, which is so in all other things, as looking at things which are future for the object of it. But when we speak of Divine Hope, as it is consider'd under the notion of a Grace, and proper to a Christian ; so there is a further reason why it should be (to choose) of things not seen. And that is, that by this means it may bring the greater glory to God, by trusting him, on his bare word, and upon the pure account of his Promise ; no more but so : we never have God more, then when we look for great things from him, where we see no probability for them in outward appearance : As Abraham, whiles against hope, he believed in hope ; he was hereby said to give glory to God, being strong in Faith, Rom. 4. 20. Thus do we by hoping for things invisible : We honor him so much the more in his Power, Goodness, and all his Attributes.

This

This therefore (for the Use of it) may serve first of all to meet with such persons as will believe God no further *then they see him*, and have no further expectation of any good thing from him, then what they find presented to their view, and outward senses; whether in regard of their own particular condition, or in regard of the general state of the Christians. If all things go well, and to their minds, as to outward success, here they can it may be see somewhat *hopeful*, but if any thing go cross and contrary, here they are quite out of heart and discouraged; such as these should here now consider, That *hope which is seen, is not hope*. It is no thanks for any to be full of comfortableness and hopefulness there, where every thing goes unto their desire: But here's the trial of true faith and hope indeed, when upon the account of God's infinite Attributes, and gracious Covenant which he hath made with us in Christ, we can hope above hope, and comfort our selves in him, even in the greatest discouragements.

Secondly, This gives us an account why there are no more true Christians then there are: (*Demas hath forsaken me, having embraced this present world*, 2 Tim. 4. 10.) But that most men embrace the world, and the Pleasures and Contentments thereof, to the neglect of Heaven and Salvation it self, and the things of a better life. It is because that these things here below and enjoyed, they are things which are seen and present; whereas the things which are above and hoped for, they are not seen, and things to come. This is still that Atheism and Infidelity which is in our hearts, that we think not God's truth and faithfulness to be a Pledge good enough to us, of those things which he hath laid up for us, but had rather have the Onions of Egypt in a Land of Bondage, but in sight, then the Milk and Honey of Canaan, a Land of Promise, but still in expectation.

And so likewise it shews us the reason why God's Children are so much scorn'd and contemn'd by men of the world; It is because they are such persons as have their good things only in Reversion. As an Heir when he is under Age, he may be perhaps slighted by the Servants, who yet when he comes to his Inheritance will be otherwise thought of.

Lastly, Seeing hope is of things which are not seen; we may here by the way take notice of the difference of these two saving Graces, Faith and Hope; whiles the former is of those things which are present, the latter of those things which are to come: And though the same things happen to be the object of each, yet under a different notion and consideration. As for example, *Eternal life*; Hope looks upon it as a thing which is future, in regard of its remoteness; but Faith looks upon it as a thing which is present, in regard of its sureness. That which is not seen for the matter of it, and so the object of Hope; the same it is seen for the certainty of it, and so the object of Faith: And so these two distinct Graces have their several Properties reserv'd unto them. And so now I have done also with the second general Part of the Text, which is the Description of true Christian hope, wherein it consists; *Hope which is seen, is not hope: For what a man seeth, &c.*

Ver. 25. *But if we hope for that we see not, then, &c.*

The third and last is the *Adjunct or Concomitant* of this hope, which follows in these words, *But if we hope for, &c.* Where we may observe, and note thus much, That true and right hope indeed, it is accompanied still with *Patience*, and waiting, and quiet resting, and dependance upon God for the things hoped for: Heb. 10. 36, *Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the Promises.* So Heb. 6. 12, *That ye may be followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the Promises.* James 3. 4. *Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and intire, wanting nothing.* Luke 21. 19. *In patience possess your souls.* And 1 Thess. 1. 3. We read of the *Patience of Hope.* Hope if it be such as it should be, it hath still *patience* annexed unto it.

This is requisite upon divers grounds and considerations: First, The ground which is intimated here in the Text, because *we hope for that which we see not.* Forasmuch as the *Object* of hope is *invisible*, the *Companion* of hope must be *patience.* There's need of *patience* for the making of us *quietly to wait* for those things which we do not *enjoy.* Those that have all things at *present* that they would have, their *patience* it is not put to the *trial*: But when they are *kept* from those things which they *long for,* then their *patience* is *tried* indeed, and there is a full discovery of it to them, how far it is in them.

Especially, if we shall add moreover, that they are things of *special worth,* and which do move the *appetite* to them: *here now* there's required *patience* so much the more, for men to be some time without those things which they have *no need of,* nor no great *desire* towards them, this is no *patience* or *forbearance* at all. But now, when it is an *excellent object* which their hope is *fastn'd upon,* to be willing to *stay some time* before they come to the *Possession* of it: Here's the true *patience* of the *Saints.* Now this is the case here, as concerning the *future condition* of Gods people in *another world*: *We hope for it,* and we have *need of patience* to keep us up in the *exercise* of our hope. It is such as the *desires* of all those who have received the *First-fruits of the Spirit,* are *importunately* carried after. They *groan* and *long* for it, and therefore have *need of patience* to *sustain* them under this their *groaning.*

Secondly, This hope of a Christian had need have *patience* to be joyn'd with it; not only from the distance of the *Object,* as a thing which is *to come* and *not seen,* but likewise from the *badness* of the *Medicine,* and the conditions which *come* between: Not only for that the *time is long,* but also for that the *way is troublesome* and dangerous, and full of annoyance. If a man have never so brave a *Palace,* or stately *Dwelling,* which he is to come unto; yet if he have a *great way* before he comes thither, his *patience* will be *exercis'd* about it. But now further, if as the *way is long,* so it be also *dirty* and subject to *Thieves;* here the life will be still so much the worse, and the greater *patience* requir'd in it. Now thus is it here with us in our *hopes of Heaven;* as the thing it self is *remote,* so there's but an *ill passage* to it in regard of the *present distress;* Whiles through many *tribulations* we must enter into

into the Kingdom of God, as the Scripture tells us, *Act. 14. 22.*

Thirdly, Things *contrary* to our hope, these likewise do call for our patience: We have need of a great deal of patience, in regard of those things which we hope for, because we meet with such things amongst them as do seem to cross those hopes unto us; And those are our *own Corruptions*, and the Assaults and Temptations of *Satan*; whereby he labours to *discourage* us, and to *dishearten* us, and to *beat us off*. Souldiers had need of patience, that they may go through those several *Hardships* and Encounters which they shall meet withall: And so have Christians in their *Spiritual Warfare*: *Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good Souldier of Christ*, sayes the Apostle to *Timothy*, *2 Tim. 2. 3.* Induring of hardness is most necessary for a Christian Souldier, in regard of the manifold Enemies and difficulties which in his Pilgrimage he is exposed unto. And those are of *three* sorts especially: First, His own *Sins* and *Corruptions*. Secondly, The Temptations of *Satan*, his great Adversary. And thirdly, The contradictions of Sinners, and the discouragements of wicked men, which here lie in his way, and obstruct him.

First, Our *own Corruptions*, and the many weaknesses which we find in our selves. A Christian when he looks into himself, and sees how much *sin* there is in him, and how little *Grace* in comparison of it, he is ready almost to *despair* in himself of ever coming to the Kingdom of Heaven. Now for this therefore there is need of patience, to wait and stay *God's good time*, for the *subduing of sin* in him, and for freeing him from it, and for the bringing of his heart into a gracious and heavenly frame and temper, as it becomes him to be in. This was that which God labor'd with *Paul*, when he was exercis'd with the thorne in the flesh, which some have thought to be *some lust or other*; *My Grace is sufficient for thee*, *2 Cor. 12. 9.*

It is the great weakness of many Christians, to be too much dejected and cast down in this particular, who because they find *Corruptions stirring in themselves*, and *some infirmities* hanging about them whiles they live here in the world, do therefore conclude that they shall never be freed from them; and therefore sometimes do most desperately give way to them, as thinking that it is to no purpose to conflict with them, but that they had as good yield to them as not, for they shall be alwayes troubled with them; and in the mean time neglecting to betake themselves to the *Grace of Christ* for the freeing of them; such as these they have great need of patience in the use of means, for the supporting of them.

Secondly, The malice and mischief of *Satan*, setting in with our own Corruptions, this calls for this patience likewise. We had need to be well resolv'd in our selves, whiles we have to do with such a potent Adversary; And wrestle not with *Flesh and Blood only*, but with *Principlities and Powers*, and *spiritual wickednesses in high places*, *Ephes. 6. 11.*

Thirdly, The Contradictions of Sinners, and the Discouragements which arise from wicked men. These make up another Consideration for the necessity of this patience likewise: And it is that which is requir'd of us as Christians; It is that which *Christ himself* exercised, whiles he endured the Contradiction of Sinners against himself, as it is noted of him

him in *Heb. 12. 3.* And it is that which all his Members also have need to exercise *for his sake*, and to draw it and fetch it from him, that they may not be wearied, or faint in their minds, from the reproaches, and scorns, and oppositions, and ill usages which they suffer from those who are Enemies both to *Him* and *them*.

Lastly, *Patience* is very justly and properly required, as an attendant upon *Hope*, because *Hope* in the nature of it breeds *patience* : The more we hope, the more *patient* we either are, or at least have cause to be in that regard. Those that have nothing to sustain them, it is no wonder that they should be *impatient* : But *hope* it is an anchor of the Soul, which is sure and steadfast, *Heb. 6. 19.* In all these respects as I have now shewn, is this *patience* requisite with *Hope*, as an adjunct and concomitant of it ; if we hope, we must *patiently* wait.

Now the Application of this Point to our selves may be reduced to these two Improvements :

First, As a just censure of many people for their defect in this particular, who are many times out of *patience*, when any evil does at any time befall them, or that any thing does fall cross to them, from whence they are ready now and then to complain, and murmur, and repine, even against God Himself. Now where's the *hope* of such kind of persons who are thus affected, seeing where there's *hope* there's also *patience*, as it is here intimated to us?

Hence also the same Apostle, *1 Thess. 4. 13.* when he would persuade Christians to *patience*, and contentation in the death of their Friends ; he wishes them, That they should not sorrow as others which had no hope. Those who have no hope of another life, nor any hints and expectations of Heaven, it is no wonder that they should be immoderate in mourning for Christian Friends departed : But as for others, they will bear it more patiently, as a fruit and effect of their hope ; And so as for that Affliction, so likewise for any other besides. It is a great discovery of the want of hope, the want of *patience*. Men may talk sometimes of Heaven, and Happiness, and Glory to come, and such things as these ; but certainly if they speak as they think, and have the power of these truths upon their hearts, it will work them more or less to *patience* in what ever condition befalls them, or is incident to them. And those that do not do so, they do hereby shame and disparage their *Hope* : This is that which too many do, and therefore are justly censurable in this particular.

This impatience of Christians, not walking worthy of their hope, does discover it self upon sundry occasions :

First, In case of wants, when they have not presently that which others have, or which themselves have a mind to. Here they are ever and anon out of *patience*, and there's no hold or rule with them. This was the impatience of Rachel, when she saw that she was destitute of Children ; Give me Children, or else I die, in *Gen. 31. 3.* This was also the impatience of the Israelites, when they wanted Bread and Flesh in the Wilderness they from hence murmured and rebell'd against Moses ; yea, indeed even against God Himself.

Secondly, In case of Delays and Procrastinations. As men will not endure to want any thing, so where they may have it, yet they will not stay for it. There's a shortness of spirit oftentimes in many persons in this

this particular: As *Jehoram* that ask'd that question, *Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?* 2 Kings 6. 33. This is another branch of *impatience*, and which crosses and contradicts *this hope* whereof we now speak, *Esay* 28. 16, *He that believeth, shall not make haste.* The more of *true Christian hope* that we have at any time in us, the more shall we be content to wait and stay *God's time* and leisure for the bestowing of that upon us, which he has promised to us.

Thirdly, In case of *Distress*, or any particular *Trouble and Affliction*: This is another discovery of *this impatience*. This is that which was observable in *Jonah*, when his *Gourd* was taken away from him, and the *Sun and Wind* beat upon him; he was *impatient* even to the death. Now all such *Distempers* as these are, they are, I say, contrary to *this Christian hope*, and so to be censur'd.

Besides which, we may take in to the bargain the consideration of many other *inconveniences* which are consequent hereunto. *This impatience*, besides that disparagement which it casts upon our *Christian Hope and Profession*, it hath many other *Evils* with it besides, and is very prejudicial to us in sundry regards.

First, It increases our *misery*, and adds to the *Affliction* which is upon us. This it does two manner of wayes: First, In respect of the *condition*. And secondly, In respect of the *mind*. In respect of the *condition* it self, as it provokes God oftentimes to multiply *Afflictions* upon us. *Impatience* under loss provokes God to the sending of greater. In respect of the *mind*. As *impatience* does so much the more amplify an *Affliction* to us, which by *patience* would be made so much the lighter: Here's a burden added to a burden: A burden in our *condition* from the *Affliction*; and a burden upon our *spirit* from the *Distemper*; and both together do very much press upon us, and weigh us down; that so accordingly we may be so much the more shy, and wary, and watchful over our selves in this particular.

Secondly, *Impatience*, it puts men upon the taking of *indirect courses*, and the use of unlawful means. What made *saul* to presume to sacrifice, when *Samuel* came not presently to him? And afterwards to run to a *Witch*, when things went cross with him? why, it was a *spirit of impatience* which was upon him: And so it is with many others besides.

Thirdly, *This impatience* it does disturb all good performances in any way or kind whatsoever: No man can serve God so chearfully, which has this *distemper* prevailing upon him.

Therefore for a second Use of this Point, and so a close of all; Let this serve to stir us up, as a *Proof and Demonstration* of our Faith, and the Hope which is in us, to labour for this *spirit of patience*, which is here commended unto us. And for this purpose take notice both of the *Incouragements* to it, and the *inducements* and arguments for it, and the *conduancements* and helps unto it.

First, For the *Inducements* and *Incouragements*, take notice of them; as namely, first of all, That here in the Text, *The earnest expectation of the Creature, waiting, &c.* The Creature though it groans, yet it waits; let not us be worse then that.

Secondly, *The practise of the Saints*, and of such persons as have received the *First-fruits of the Spirit*, who are said here also to practise this

G g patience;

patience; and though sometimes in *Temptation* may be guilty in this particular, yet do constantly endeavour the contrary, and do frame themselves to a *patient abiding*, as it is here exprest: *Take my brethren the Prophets for an example of patience, &c.* James 5. 10.

Thirdly, The *practise of all other men besides in other things*, as to their particular *Concernments*: The *Merchant* in his way, the *Souldier* in his, the *Husbandman* in his; as it is also there exprest, in James 5. 7.

Fourthly, The *practise of God Himself*; how patient is He towards us, and waiting for us. These, and the like, are *Arguments, and Encouragements, and Inducements* for it.

There are also *Helps and Conducements* to it, for the obtaining of it. As,

First, *Prayer and Supplication*: If any man want patience, (which is the wisdom more particularly there spoken of) let him ask it of God, Jam. 1. 5.

Secondly, *Study the Promises*, and dwell more upon the *Attributes of God*.

Thirldly, *Reflect upon former experiences*: *Experience breeds patience*, Rom. 5. 4.

Fourthly, Let us set before us *future Glory*, and therein imitate *Christ Himself* upon the like occasions; *Who for the Glory which was set before him, endured the Cross, and despised the shame, &c.* as it is in Heb. 12. 2.

And so I have done also with the *third general Part* of the Text, which is the *Adjunct or Concomitant of Hope*, and that is *patience*: If we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. So much for that, and so much of the 24th and 25th verses of this Chapter.

S E R M O N.



S E R M O N XXVIII.

R O M. 8. 26.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities : for we know not what we should pray for as we ought : but the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

The Patient induring of Afflictions, and the suffering of this present Life is a Business of so much hardness and difficulty for the attaining of it, and the perswading of our selves unto it, as that we cannot have Arguments enough, to work us and move us hereunto; for which purpose the Apostle Paul in this Scripture, which we have now before us, does make use of a variety of them one after another. First, from our company in suffering, We suffer with Christ, in the 17th. Verse. Secondly, From the consequent of our suffering; which is Incomparable Glory, in the 18th. Verse. Thirdly, From the Example of the Creature; groaning and waiting for our sakes, when this Glory shall be revealed. Fourthly, From the Nature of Hope, which has alwayes Patience annex'd unto it. And Fifthly, Here now in this Verse which I have read unto you, from that Help and Supply which is afforded even by the Spirit of God Himself in such Conditions. Likewise the Spirit also, &c.

IN the whole Verse taken together, there are two General Parts considerable. First, *The General Assertion or Proposition.* Secondly, *The Particular Instance, or Specification :* The General Proposition, that we have in these words, *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities ;* The particular Specification that we have in these, *For we know not what we should pray for as we ought, &c.*

We begin with the *First* of these parts, and of that only at this time, which is the general Assertion or Proposition. *The Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities ;* wherein again we have two branches more. First, *The Patient* with his *Disease*, and that is *Christians* under *Infirmities.* Secondly, *The Physician* with his *Care.* And that is, the *Spirit* helping these *Infirmities.*

First, To speak of the former; here's *the Patient with his Disease,* St. Paul and the rest of Believers lying under *Infirmities, Our Infirmities.*

G g 2

Infirmities

Infirmities are incident to the best: Take notice of that. The best Christians that are, they have their *Infirmities* and Weaknesses in them. This is true according to a double sense and notion of the word, whether we take it in a moral sense, or a physical. If we take it in a moral sense, so it denotes more especially the *Infirmities* of the mind and spirit; And those are the *Infirmities* of sin: If we take it in a physical sense, so it denotes more especially the *Infirmities* of the Body, and outward man, and those are the *Infirmities* of Affliction. Now in both of these considerations, are the best of Christians subject to *Infirmities*.

First, for *Spiritual or Moral Infirmities*; the *Infirmities* of Sin and of Soul, Gods Children they have their *Infirmities* here. St. Paul himself, a most eminent Apostle; the believing Romans, most eminent Christians; even such as these they had all their weaknesses with them, as is here imply'd. In many things we offend all, sayes the Apostle James, cap. 3. 2. And, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive our selves, sayes the Apostle John in 2 Job. 1. 8. It is a point which needs not much proving, (it were well it did) as being too clear and manifest by experience. It is that which shews it self upon all occasions; and in all particulars in them.

First, In matter of Judgment; a great deal of weakness here. The best of Gods Servants, they have been sometimes under great mistakes, and fallen into strange kind of Errors and fond conceits. *Nullum Magnum Ingenium sine aliqua dementia*. There's hardly any great wit, but it hath some kind of extravagancy with it. And the quickest and acutest persons, they may sometimes fall asleep. There are very few of the Ancients, and those who have been most of all noted both for Piety and Learning amongst them; but they have had their particular opinions, which have been censured in them.

Secondly, In point of Affection: A great deal of weakness here also; weakness of mind in strength of Passion, and that in all the kinds and varieties of it. Sampson; how weak in his Love to his enticing Delilah? David, how weak in his Grief for his rebellious Absalom? Jonab, how weak in his anger for his wither'd gourd? The Disciples, how weak in their fear, when they were in the Tempest, though with Christ himself? And so of the rest: what the Psalmist sayes of himself in regard of his impatience and distrustfulness; the same may any other Christian say of the like distemper; *This is mine Infirmity*, in Psal. 77. 10. Being as St. James sayes of Elias, in Jam. 5. 17. That he was *in paucis diebus* a man subject to the like passions and affections with other men, and the exorbitancies of them.

Thirdly, In point of Practice and daily converse; A great deal of weakness and infirmity is there here also, discovering of it self in them upon several occasions; *Invincible Infirmities*, and such as they do not easily quit or free themselves from. *Infirmities* of Age and Sickness. *Infirmities* of Sex and Condition. *Infirmities* of Temper, and Natural Constitution. *Infirmities* of Custome and Use, and the like. All these are such kind of weaknesses as are attendant upon them, and though occasion'd sometimes from the outward man, do cleave to the inward. *Infirmities* in regard of Sin, as not so able alwayes to resist it. And *Infirmities* in regard of good; as not so able alwayes to perform it; still
some

some Infirmary or other discovers it self in them. And that in every one of them. *Paul and Barnabas, their Contention, Act. 15. 39. Peter and Barnabas their Dissimulation, Gal. 2. 12, 13. James and John, their fierceness, and rashness, and impotent, and inconsiderate zeal, Luk. 9. 54, 55.* And so in many other besides of the like nature with them.

For the better Illustration of this point, there are two things here considerable of us. First, whence it is so, in regard of the thing it self. Secondly, why it is so, in regard of Gods Permission and ordering of it.

First, *Whence it is so*; for the thing it self. And here there is this brief account which may be given of it; First, *The general Corruption of Nature*, which is in part remaining still even in the Servants of God themselves; *Infirmities* are nothing else but *Branches of the first Sin* that was committed in the world, wherein every Son and Daughter of Adam and Eve hath a share. And though it be very much broken and restrain'd in those which are regenerate; yet it is more or less in them. And so far forth as it is, so far forth are they lyable to those weaknesses whereof we now speak: As those who have an hereditary disease, which they have contracted from their Parents, they have a constant weakness in them.

Secondly, As from the Corruption of Nature; so likewise from the Imperfection of Grace. Though nature were naught at first, yet if Grace had perfectly cured it, it were another matter, and we might perhaps gather up our strength again. But this is not done in this life, the Spirit is willing, and the Flesh is weak, as our Saviour said sometimes of his Disciples. Grace it is in us, but very small and imperfect here in the world. Now where the Disease is strong, and Nature is weak; there must needs be weakness indeed.

Thirdly, The Assaults of Satan; He invades them and binds them, and takes away their strength from them by his frequent combates and conflicts with them.

To which we may justly add, sometimes Christians own neglect of themselves. As those who have but weak constitutions, and withall neglect to watch over themselves, that are careless of their Diet, and do wilfully distemper themselves, they may very easily be full of Infirmities. Even so it is also with the Soul; every Sin, especially which is wilful, it does much abate of mens spiritual strength, and of that special vigour which would be otherwise in them. And thus we see whence this weakness proceeds, as for the thing it self.

Now further, secondly, For the ground of it on Gods part, as to his sufferance and permission of it, we may take it thus; First, hereby to humble them, and to keep down Pride in them; to shew them what they are of themselves, and what need they have of continual succour, and supply from him, and to be dependant upon his free Grace. The Lord does so much hate and abhor Pride and a presumptuous Spirit, that he suffers his Children sometimes to fall into any sin, rather than this, for the prevention of this in them; Yea, sometimes upon this account, to expose them, and to give them up even to the buffetings of Satan himself; as we have an eminent example hereof in the Apostle Paul, who lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance
of

of the revelations, had given to him a thorn in the flesh, *2 Cor. 12. 7.*

Secondly, As to prevent Pride *in themselves*, so to prevent also in *others* an over-willing opinion of them; at least that they may not *idolize* them, and set *too high a price* upon them, and so have the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ in respect of Persons; for people are commonly and for the most part apt to be in their extreams in this particular; either to *undervalue* the Servants of God, and not to *own* that real worth which is in them, or else to value them more than *they should do*, and to *deifie* them, and to extol them to the clouds; and that also sometimes to the disparaging and diminishing of *others which are their Brethren*, and perhaps not inferiour to them. As the *Barbarians* carried it to *Paul*; when he had escaped the Tempest. First, They cry'd him down for a Murtherer, and then afterwards they adored him for a God, *Act. 28. 6.* Even so is it likewise with many others in the like cases, where they have a *prejudice* against any man, no man considerable, though never so eminent; and where they take a *fancy* to any man, no man comparable, though never so deficient. Now God does of purpose set himself to cross such distempers and humours as these are; so that where men are at any time advanced more than they should be, he suffers them to discover *some Infirmity* or other in them, as may lessen such an high opinion and estimation of them. There's many a man in the world who had escaped many a Temptation and Scandal which he has fallen into, if it had not been for the excessive applauses of those that have adored him. God will have us to think of *men as men*, and not above that which is written; that *so none of us may be puffed up for one against another*, as the Apostle expresses it, *1 Cor. 4. v. 6.*

Thirdly, God suffers Infirmities in his Children, for the greater manifestation of his own power and strength in *those Infirmities*. This is expressly also noted concerning the Apostle *Paul* in the place before cited, *2 Cor. 12. 9.* Where the Lord tells him, that his *Grace was sufficient for him*, and that his strength was made perfect *in weakness*; and so it is in many others besides, whiles he does conquer those weaknesses in them, and gives them a *strength* which is opposite to them.

Lastly, God orders these his Infirmities to his Servants; as *matters of tryal*, and exercise to them in *their Christian course*; As so many *Goads and Thorns* in their sides whereby to *afflict* them, and so to *wean* them so much the more *from the world*, to make them in love with a *better place*; where all these weaknesses and Infirmities which are upon them shall be wholly scatter'd and taken away from them, and themselves made fully compleat and perfect in all goodness. There's nothing which makes the Children of God more to long, and breath after Heaven, than the consideration of *that freedom* which they shall there enjoy from the present *burden of Sin*. Thus we see how it comes about that there are Infirmities even in the best of Gods Servants.

The Consideration of this Point may be *variously* improved by us. First, as a very good Direction for the regulating of our *Christian converse*, and communion with one another in the world. Namely, with a great deal of *tenderness and condiscension* and meekness of Spirit, we should make account whomsoever we have to deal withall, that we shall

shall meet with some weaknesſes in them more or leſs, and accordingly to prepare for it, that we may frame our ſelves to ſuch a carriage and behaviour as may be moſt ſutable and agreeable hereunto. We do not converſe with *Angels*, but with *Men*, who are Creatures ſubject to *Infirmities*: We are not without *Infirmities* our ſelves, and therefore cannot expect that others ſhould be without them neither. The want of which conſideration is the cauſe of ſo much *unquietneſs* and *diſcontent* as there is ſometimes in the World; whiles people expecting *Perfection*, and being diſappointed, are therefore troubled. No, as long as there is *Corrupt Nature*, as we have ſhewn, there will be *Infirmities*. There's no man wholly without them, though he is *happieſt* who has the feweſt of them. And accordingly it concerns us to carry our ſelves answerably in them, and that in ſundry particulars:

First, By covering them and hiding them all we can: In 1 Pet. 4. 8. It is ſaid of Love, That it will cover a multitude of ſins. And this is required in *Chriſtians* one to another, to cover one anothers *Infirmities* with the mantle of Love: Not to publiſh them, or divulge them, or blaze them abroad, but to hide and conceal them. To diſcover them to the Parties themſelves which are guilty of them in a way of friendly *advertiſement*, but to cover them from others, for the prevention of Scandal and Reproach, and to caſt, as it were, a Vail over them. To ſee them, and not to ſee them, eſpecially in trivial matters, and which will wear off of themſelves.

Secondly, As to cover them, ſo to bear with them, and to pity and compaſſionate thoſe who are guilty of them: This is another property of *Charity*, That it beareth all things. There's a ſupporting, and ſuſtaining, and carrying of each others *Infirmities*, which is here required of us, as Rom. 15. 1. We then that are ſtrong, ought to bear the *infirmities* of the weak, and not to pleaſe our ſelves. And ſo Gal. 6. 2. Bear ye one anothers burdens, and ſo fulfil the law of Chriſt. This we ſhould do the rather, that ſo others may bear with us. Thoſe who are moſt ſenſible of their own weakneſs, will be commonly more tender to others. As it is ſaid of the High Prieſt under the Law, That he was to have compaſſion on the ignorant, and on them that were out of the way: ſo much as himſelf alſo was compaſt with *infirmities*, in Heb. 5. 2. This does not take away juſt and ſeaſonable *Admonition*, which either *Ministers* or *Chriſtians* are to perform one to another, but only captiouſneſs, and rigorousneſs, and ſeverity. We may not tolerate, or indulge, or allow of *Infirmities* in any; but we muſt bear with them in the beſt that are.

Thirdly, We muſt alſo help them, and remedy them all we can; As cover them, ſo recover them likewise, where we are able to do it. Thus Gal. 6. 1. Brethren, ſayes the Apoſtle Paul, if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of meekneſs, conſidering thyſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted. Where we diſcover *Infirmities* in any, we ſhould do all that may be to free them from them, *reſtore*, that is, to ſet them in joyn again, as the word properly ſignifies, a word taken from *Surgeons* or *Bone-ſetters* in the compaſs of their Calling, which requires both a great deal of ſkill and tenderneſs for the managing of it. And that's the firſt Uſe of this Point, as it ſerves to direct us in our carriage and converſe with other perſons.

Secondly,

Secondly, It teaches us also to take heed of addicting our selves absolutely to any mens practise or example: Ye shall have some kind of people now and then that will make other mens actions to be an infallible *rule to themselves*, that what such and such persons *do before them*, that they also must *do likewise*. But this observation here before us does put an obstruction to such a carriage as this is, seeing the best that are have their weaknesses; we may not therefore absolutely and indefinitely *comply with them*, lest our selves be as weak *as they* in so doing, and so contract their infirmities to our selves. It is not so much *who do any thing*, as what it is which is *done by them*, and from what principle it *proceeds in them*; whether from *Grace or Nature*, whether from *Flesh or Spirit*, whether from *Strength or else from Infir-mity*.

But yet thirdly, This is no ground of excuse to any Persons in their wilful miscarriages. There are a great many of people in the World, who are ready to improve this Observation to a *spirit of Pre-sumption*; Oh ye shall *hear them say*, when they are told of any thing which is amiss in them; Alas! all men *have their Infirmities*, and the best that are have their failings. And so they think thereby to excuse and defend themselves under the greatest and vilest enormities that can possibly be thought of. But this is a very gross mistake, and *abuse in them*, and such as will not *hold water* at another day. Such courses as these now mention'd, they are not *Infirmities*, but *Iniquities*: And we may take notice of the difference which is between them in *sundry respects*:

First, They are much distinguish'd in the *matter* and nature of them, for the *things themselves*: Iniquities they are *grosser abominations*, whereas *Infirmities* are *lighter miscarriages*.

Secondly, They are distinguish'd from the *person* and principle from whence they *proceed*. The former they are the results of the *strength of Cor-ruption*: The latter they are the effects only of the weakness and imperfection of *Grace*. Those that live in a constant course of wickedness, they are not *weak*, but *dead*; not weak *in Grace*, but rather dead in *Tres-passes and Sins*, which has a wide difference with it.

Thirdly, They are distinguish'd from the *carriage* of them, and manner of *acting*. *Infirmities* they proceed with much reluctance and opposition against them: Those who are guilty of them, they commonly *humble and bewail themselves* for them, strive and wrestle with them, do all they can to *avoid them and shake them off*, and to free themselves from them. Whereas *iniquities* and presumptuous miscarriages, men commonly *please themselves in them*, or at least plead for them, and defend them, and excuse them all *they can*: Sins of *custom and counsel*, and deliberation, and *settled resolution*, as sometimes we shall observe them in many persons: They are not *infirmities*, but *enormities* and abominations. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the Infirmities of Christians in the first sense, namely, as they may be taken *morally* for those Infirmities which are incident to the mind and inward man. These are such as even the best of God's Servants in this life are *incompass'd* withall.

The second is, as they may be taken *physically* for the infirmities of mind and body together, and referring to *affliction*. These make up
another

another kind of infirmities which God's Children are also troubled with-
all here in this life; *Our* infirmities thus likewise. We have divers instan-
ces of it both in Scripture and *daily experience*. Thus *Timothy had his*
often infirmities, *weakness* 1 Tim. 5. 23. Infirmities of sickness. The
Corinthians had many sick and weak among them, 1 Cor. 11. 30. And St. Paul
himself, *who is weak, and I am not weak*. And so for mind *We were*
troubled on every side; within were fightings, without were fears, 2 Cor.
7. 5.

This we cannot wonder at, if we consider the *frame and mould* which
the Children of God do consist of, as well as *others*. Their Bodies are
houses of Clay, and their *Spirits* they have a *vanity* upon them, and
therefore it cannot be strange that themselves should be *weak and in-*
firm.

And then again as they have *frail Bodies* for the *matter* of them, so
they have *sinful Souls* for the *demerit*. And it is these which do *deserve*
and *occasion* these evils to them: The weakness of *Corruption* will breed
the weakness of *Affliction*; and *sinful Bodies* will be diseased.

This should teach us not to be *offended* when these things fall out so
to be, nor to be dismayed at them. And moreover not from hence to
censure either *our selves* or other men from such things as these are; whiles
the best that are they are liable to Infirmities both in one kind or other;
to the Infirmities of *Sin* and *Corruptions*, by taking Infirmities in a *moral*
sense. And to the Infirmities of *trouble and affliction*, by taking Infirmi-
ties also in a *physical*. And so now I have done with the *first Branch*
of this Proposition before us: And that is the Patient, together with the
Disease; *Christians under Infirmities, Our Infirmities*.

The second is the *physician* together with the *Cure*; And that is the
Spirit helping of our Infirmities. The *Spirit* may be taken *two* manner
of wayes, as it is else-where in Scripture: Either first, For our *own*
Spirit; The *Spirit of man*. Or secondly, For the *Holy Spirit*; The *Spi-*
rit of God. Now it is true in some sense of either, that it does help our
Infirmities. First, It is true in some sense of *our own spirit*; according to
that of *Solomon*, Prov. 18. 14. *The spirit of man will sustain his infirmi-*
ties. Take a man of a *strong natural spirit*, and it will carry him through
a great deal of trouble with a great deal of *strength*: *A merry heart does*
good like a Medicine, Prov. 17. 22. And a mans *Reason*, it does some-
times help his *Passion*. It is that which divers of the *Heathen Philosophers*
have been famous for now and then, as to the improvements of
it.

But secondly, *Not to trouble you with Impertinencies*. This is not
that which is to be understood here in this place: The *spirit* here in the
Text is not *our own Spirit*, but the *Spirit of God*; even the *Holy Ghost*
Himself, who is here by a special Emphasis called *the Spirit*; which does
not use in the Language of Scripture to be attributed to our *own spirit*, at
least without some *addition* to it. The word here also which is translated
Help, is likewise very *emphatical*, which is an expression taken from *two*
persons or more, which are to lift up some heavy burden, and do mutually
help one another, by standing at each end of the burden, one over against
the other: Or if ye will, from *Nurses*, which attending *sick persons*, do
stay them and lift them up in their Beds, being ready of themselves to

H h h

fail,

fail, and faint away. Even thus does the Spirit of God with his Servants in their manifold Infirmities; he does co-operate and concur with them, and sustain them, and *hold them up*.

Whiles it is said here in this place, *That the Spirit helpeth our Infirmities*; We are to take *those Infirmities* in the full latitude and extent of them, and according to each acceptation of them as we have already mention'd; that is, both of *moral* Infirmities and *physical*: The Infirmities of *Sin* and *Corruption*, and the Infirmities of *Trouble* and *Affliction* both.

First, We may take it of *moral* and *sinful* Infirmities; *The Spirit of God helps us here*; not to them; take heed of *that*. But in them, and from them, and about them, and in reference to them. The Spirit of God *heals* those weaknesses and Infirmities which are in us, and puts a *contrary strength* into us. And so his help to this purpose may be rank'd into two sorts:

First, That help which he gives us *against Corruptions*, for the avoiding of them.

Secondly, That help which he gives us to Duties, for the performing of them.

First, *The Spirit helps our Infirmities*; that is, he *over-aws our Temptations*, and removes our Corruptions from us: Grace, it corrects *Nature*, and takes away the *Distempers* of it. And those persons who consider'd in themselves have many weaknesses and distempers in them; where the Spirit of God comes to abide, he removes those Distempers from them; at least in such a measure and degree, as not wholly to prevail upon them. In Psal. 103. 3. *Who forgiveth all thy Sins, and healeth all thy Diseases*: Not corporal only, but *spiritual*.

The Spirit of God where-ever he comes, *he makes a change in that soul* which he comes into, and fits it for his own residence and abode in it. As a man that comes into any House to dwell in, he makes up all the breaches and cracks which he perceives in it: Even so does the Holy Ghost by degrees in the hearts of Believers; *Who are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit*, Ephes. 2. 22. The more spiritual that any persons are, the more likely are they to be freed from carnal affections, and those Infirmities which cleave unto them, whether *Ignorance*, or *Passion*, or *Worldly-mindedness*, or what-ever we can name. The blessed Spirit of God, where-ever he is a Dweller, he is an Healer, and so an Helper: He is not only an Inhabitant, but also a Physician.

The consideration hereof should teach us to give up our selves to his gracious guidance and governance of us, and influence upon us. We should suffer him to rule in our hearts, and to have the full sway and power over us in all his sweet and blessed applications of himself unto us. The reason why many people lie so long under great Infirmities which do prevail upon them, is, because they do not so readily close with the Spirit of God in this particular: *I would have healed them* (says the Lord) *and they would not be healed: They shut the door upon the Physician, and will not hearken to his seasonable advice and counselling of them*. And from hence it comes to pass, that their weaknesses increase upon them, even to death it self. As the Lord complains of the Israelites, in Psal.

Pfal. 81. 11, 12, *My people would not hearken to my Voice, and Israel would have none of me: So I gave them up to their own hearts lusts, to walk in their own counsels.* Thus does the Spirit help us in our Infirmities, by giving us strength against Corruption.

Secondly, He helps us also in our *Infirmities*, by giving us strength unto *Duty*. And this seems in a special manner to be intended here in the Text, as appears by that which follows; where it said, *That we know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us.* So that the Spirit helps our *Infirmities* so far forth as he assists our *Prayers*, and all holy *Exercises* besides, which as *Christians* God requires of us. This we may conceive him to do according to a two-fold explication: First, In a way of gracious *Acceptance*. And secondly, In a way of gracious *Assistance*.

First, By his *gracious Acceptance*: The Spirit helps our *Infirmities* thus, by bearing with us in what is done by us, notwithstanding the *Infirmities* which are in us. *Acceptance of endeavour* is a great help of *Infirmity*; As we may see in a *Father* towards his *Child*, when he puts him upon the doing of any thing which he perceives to be too hard for him, and the *Child* does it as well as he can the *Father* takes it well from him. Here *Acceptance* it does make amends for non-performance, and does supply the defects of it: That which is well taken, it is so far forth well done; why thus it is now in this case with the *Spirit of God* towards his *Children*. He does accept their performances from them, in the midst of much infirmity in them, where they are careful and endeavouring to do better. It is said of *Hezekiah*, That he prayed for the people, when they came to receive the *Pasover*; *The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek the Lord God of his Fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary*; that is, though he be not altogether so perfect and exact as it becomes him to be: *And the Lord hearkned to Hezekiah, and healed the people,* 2 Chron. 30. 18. Thus when God's people do their endeavour, and are careful in truth of heart to set themselves to the serving of him, he does kindly and graciously accept of these endeavours of theirs from them. As *David* says of himself, Psal. 6. 9, *The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord will accept my prayer.* Thus does he help our *Infirmities*, in reference to his *gracious Acceptance*.

Secondly, By his *gracious Assistance*: He helps them here also: *When I am weak* (says the Apostle Paul) *then am I strong,* 2 Cor. 12. 10. *And I can do all things through Christ that strengthens us,* Phil. 4. 13. There's a double weakness or infirmity upon us, which is considerable in us in point of *Duty*: The one is of indisposition to it; And the other is of insufficiency in it. We are many times through infirmity averse and loth to the undertaking of it, and we are many times through infirmity likewise remiss and failing in the performance. Now the Spirit of God does help our infirmities in matter of *Duty* in each of these cases.

First, In our indispositions to *Duty*, by provoking us and exciting us hereunto, and putting us upon it. This is that which the Spirit of God does oftentimes for us, He prevents us by his *gracious motions and suggestions* to us: He is still following us with some good instigation or other, with Arguments and Reasons for it. According to that of the Prophet

Esay, in Chap. 30. 21, *Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.* Those Duties which we are failing in for the undertaking of them, in regard of that sluggishness which is upon us; the Spirit himself does oftentimes quicken us and excites us unto them.

But secondly, In our insufficiency in Duty, the Spirit helps our infirmities here likewise; where we *flag* and are apt to *fail in the performance*, he does there strengthen us *in it*. As in particular for this *Duty of prayer*, which is here instanc'd in in the Text, and which we shall have occasion to speak more of hereafter. The Spirit of God helps the infirmities of Christians here by way of *assistance*, not only as to the *outward performance* and *matter of the duty*, as it is a business of *Parts*, and the *common Gifts* of the Spirit; but especially as to the *inward performance* of the Duty, as it is a business of *Grace*, and the special Gifts of the Spirit: He does help them and inable them here also.

This for the Use of it serves first of all, as a matter of great *comfort and encouragement* to the Servants of God in those Duties which are undertaken by them; that they have so strong and able an Helper as this to go along with them: In great Difficulties men love to have great assistance. This is that which we have here in our dealings with God, He gives us here that which he commands us: As he commands us to pray to him, so he helps us in those Prayers which we so make.

And this is that (by the way) which makes them for the most part so prevalent with him, not only as they are offer'd to him (and presented) in the name of his Son, in whom he is well pleas'd, but also by the dictates and breathings of his own Spirit in us, which makes intercession for us. There being nothing acceptable to God, but that which first of all comes from him, and is given by him.

Secondly, It serves by way of *Direction*. Seeing the Spirit assists us in Duty, and conveys strength to us in it; why then if at any time we want this assistance, let us examine whence it proceeds, and acknowledge his freedom in this particular, who bloweth and breatheth as he pleases. The Spirit helpeth our Infirmities; that is, it is his work and office to do it, though for such a particular time and season he may suspend the actual performance, which is to be inquired into by us. And we are to be humbled in our selves for his occasional withdrawals from us.

Thirdly, It teaches us not to go forth in our own strength in any Duty which we take in hand, but to fetch strength and power from the Spirit, and to depend upon him for his assistance. When being weak in our selves, we will yet set upon any thing without the help of the Spirit of God, we can look for nothing in it but miscarriage.

Lastly, In all our Performances, where we find our selves to be at any time any thing more enlarg'd then other, let us acknowledge this work of the Spirit in his assistance of us, and be thankful to him for it: Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us: but unto thy Name we give the praise. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the first notion and kind of Infirmities, wherein the Spirit of God is helpful to us: And they are moral Infirmities, the Infirmities of Sin and Corruption; either Positive, as to matter of Evil; or Privative, as to matter of Good.

Now secondly, It holds good also, as to the *Infirmities of Trouble and Affliction*; The Spirit of God does help the Children of God even in those Infirmities likewise. Thus *Psal. 94. 17, 18. Unless the Lord had been mine Help, my Soul had almost dwelt in silence, when I said, my foot slipped, Thy mercy O Lord held me up. Psal. 55. 22. Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee, he shall never suffer the Righteous to be moved. So Psal. 3. 5. The Lord sustained me. And Psal. 86. 17. Because thou Lord hast holpen me, and comforted me.*

And as this Help is spoken of as coming from God in General; So also from the Spirit of God in particular, as *Psal. 51. 11, 12. Take not thy Holy Spirit from me, uphold me by thy free Spirit. And Psal. 143. 10. Thy Good Spirit shall lead me into the Land of uprightness, &c.*

Now the Spirit of God is active in us to this purpose; upon a various account. First, By virtue of his Office, and that work which does more properly and peculiarly belong unto him. *Job. 14. 26. He is the God that comforteth those that are cast down, 2 Cor. 7. 6. The God of Patience and Consolation, Rom. 15. 5. The Father of Mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our Tribulations; that is, whose office, and work, and property it is so to do; That's one Consideration, his Office.*

Secondly, His Promise; by vertue of that also. It is that which he hath made to his People, for his helping and sustaining of them in all their troubles and calamities that befall them; as *Esay 43. 2. When thou goest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou goest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, &c. So Esay 41. 10. Fear not, O Jacob, I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea I will uphold thee. Three words at once. It is the Promise which Christ makes for his Spirit in the sending of his Disciples, That he will not leave them comfortless or destitute, or Orphans, as the word signifies; It holds from his Promise.*

Thirdly, From his Nature: He helps us because he pities us, and has compassion upon us as a Father hath over his Children. *Pf. 103. 13. He said, surely, They are my People, and so he was their Saviour. In his love and his pity he redeemed them, and carried them all his days, Esay 63. 8, 9.*

Lastly, Taking this Spirit more particularly for the Spirit of Christ, from the similitude, and likeness of Condition. He helps our Infirmities, as having taken our Infirmities upon him. And thus the Scripture exhibits it to us; As in *Heb. 2. 17, 18, It behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, &c. For in that he himself hath suffer'd being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. And Heb. 4. 15. We have not an high Priest which cannot be tempted with the feeling of our Infirmities, but was in all points tempted, like as we are; yet without Sin. Thus we see upon what account the Spirit of Christ does thus help us in our Infirmities.*

Now, If it shall be further demanded, by what wayes, and in what manner this is done; we may take it briefly in these following particulars.

First, By his Counsel, Directing us what to do, and how to carry our selves in such Conditions: There are many, which might be happier than they

they are, when any evil happens unto them, if they had but some wise person to advise them, and to direct them in such and such circumstances; *In the multitude of Counsellors there is safety*, as Solomon tells us: Now the Spirit of God to those who are the Children of God, is instead of a thousand unto them. He is a daily and continual Monitor and Adviser, and Counsellor of them. *Thou shalt guide me with thy Counsel, and afterwards receive me unto Glory*, Psal. 73. 24. And this Counsel of his it is sundry wayes imparted unto us. First, In the immediate Applications of himself to our own Hearts and Spirits. Secondly, In the Directions of the Scripture, which we are inabled to apply to our selves, *Thy Testimonies are my Counsellors*, Psal. 119. 24. Thirdly, In the mouths of Friends, who have the spirit of God eminently in them.

Secondly, As the Spirit helps by his Counsel; so also by his Comfort: Comfort, It is an Help in Affliction, and this is dispers'd by the Spirit of God. First, By testifying to us, and with us, *That we are his Children*, Rom. 8. 16. Secondly, by signifying to us, that he does own us, and take notice of us in our present condition. Thirdly, By testifying his love to us, and shedding it abroad in our hearts. This makes us even to *Glory in tribulation*, as the Apostle tells us in Rom. 5. v 3. 5.

Thirdly, The Spirit helps by his Assistance and particular relief in our particular Condition. First, By qualifying of the Affliction, and mitigating the violence of it. Secondly, By strengthening of the person, and inabling him to the induring of it. Thirdly, By changing of the Condition, and freeing and delivering of him from it.

Lastly, The Spirit helps our Infirmities, by his Intercession which he makes in our hearts, as it is here express'd in the Text, and which hereafter (God willing) we shall come to: A Spirit of prayer, is alwayes a Spirit of help; and so long as God does at any time keep this up in his Servants, so long it can surely be no other than well with them. The Consideration of these things may be thus far useful to us in a way of Application.

First, Seeing the spirit helps our Infirmities, it concerns us therefore to be very careful how we carry our selves towards this Spirit, and in a special manner to take heed of grieving of him. *Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God*, Eph. 4. 30. For if we grieve him, who shall comfort us? We see how it is in the world, the more need that any have of any Person, the more officious and serviceable are they to him, and afraid to offend him, why thus should it now be with us towards the Spirit of God; Forasmuch, as he helps our Infirmities, and upon the Point none but he; therefore take heed of displeasing him, or of doing any thing which may be offensive to him. It is the Counsel which is given in Ecclesiasticus, cap. 38. 1. *Honour a Physician with the honour which is due unto him, for the uses which you may have of him*. Suppose that any man were sick of some grievous and dangerous Disease, would he now anger and provoke his Physician, and him that should recover him of it? No, but he would be ready to give him all the heed, and respect that might be: Even so should it be likewise with us in our carriage to the spirit of God, who alone helps our Infirmities.

Secondly, Where we are at any time inabled, or see any others inabled

inabled before us, to indure any afflictions whatsoever without *fainting and sinking under it*; let us see here to whom to acknowledg it, and to give the *Glory of it*; And that is to the *Spirit of God alone*, who alone is herein helpful to us. Let us not attribute to *our selves*, or our own *meer natural* strength, which is very imperfect and deficient in us to this purpose; nor let us attribute to *Angels or Saints* which are insufficient here likewise. The *Papists*, they have for every Disease and Infirmary some peculiar *Saint* whom they rely upon in such conditions; one for the Tooth ach, and another for the Head-ach, and another for the Stone, we have a better helper than any or all of these. *Even the spirit helping our Infirmities.*

Therefore let us learn to acknowledge him, and that also in the help which is administred and afforded to us by *Men and Means*; *Physicians* they are to have their due acknowledgment: But when they have done all they can, it is the *Spirit* which helps our Infirmities; without whom, the best in that kind, are *Physicians of no value.*

Thirdly, We see here the advantage and *priviledge of the Servants of God* in all the Infirmities which are incident to them, whether *Moral or Natural*: If we look upon them in *Moral Infirmities*, and the weakness of the *inward man*; As they have *two things* which make against them, to wit, *their own sinful Nature within them*, and the *indeavour* of the *Evil Spirit without them*; so they have also *two things* which make for them, which is their *own Spirit renewed by Grace*, and the work of Regeneration in their *hearts*; as also the *Spirit of God assisting them*, and *exciting, and provoking, and strengthening of that Grace in them.* Again, If we look upon them in *natural Infirmities*, and the Infirmities of the *outward man*; As they have the strength of *Natural Corruption* so also the strength of *spiritual Corroboration.*

For which cause they should accordingly be kept from too much fear of future calamities, when they shall think they know not what may befall them; This is enough whereby to satisfy them, that the *Spirit of God* will help their Infirmities: So much for that. And so I have done with the first general Part of the Verse, which is the *general Proposition.* The next is the particular *Instance*; *But, &c.*

S E R M O N.



S E R M O N XXIX.

R O M. 8. 26.

For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Those who have sickly Bodies, and many weaknesses hanging about them, they count it an advantage to them, to have some able Physitian near them, who may be useful and helpful to them, and an Helper and Healer of them upon all occasions. The first blessing is Health, and freedom from all kind of all Distempers. But the second blessing is Physick, and means of Recovery. The latter whereof is that, which is here observable of us to be the Priviledge of the Servants of God in the midst of those manifold weaknesses, which in this World they are subject unto; whether Moral, or Physical: Whether the weaknesses of Sin and Corruption, as attending their Souls; or the weaknesses of Sickness and Affliction in their outward man: That though their Infirmities be many, yet their Helper is Mighty; and such an one as is alwayes about them, and near unto them; even the Spirit of God Himself that dwells in them. This is that which is here exhibited to us in this Verse which we have still before us. I have already observ'd in it two main Parts as considerable of us: First, A general Assertion, or Proposition. And secondly, A particular instance or specification. The general Proposition, that we have in these words, Likewise also the Spirit helpeth our Infirmities. The particular instance, that we have in these; For we know not what we should pray, &c. And this is that which, with God's Assistance, we are now to treat of at this present time.

THe second general Part of this Verse is the particular instance or specification, in these words, *For, &c.* Wherein again we have two Branches further considerable: First, The Defect or Infirmity mention'd. Secondly, The happy supply of this Defect. The Defect or Infirmity it self, that's in these words, *We know not what we should pray for as we ought.* The supply of this Defect, that's in these words, *But the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be utter'd.*

We

We begin with the *first* of these parts, *viz.* The *Defect* or *Infirmity* ; *We know not what to pray for, &c.* From whence we may observe thus much, That even the *Servants of God themselves* they are oftentimes very much to seek in matter of prayer. This is that which *St. Paul* does here signify to us under his *own person*, and under the *Person of these Romans* to whom he here writes. Now there is a *three-fold* Impotency or Defect, which does lie upon them to this purpose :

First, In reference to the *undertaking* of the Duty ; they are oftentimes indisposed to the performance.

Secondly, In reference to the *matter* of the Duty ; they are ignorant of what they should pray for.

Thirdly, In reference to the *carriage* of the Duty ; they oftentimes fail in the manner of praying.

First, In reference to the *very performance* it self : God's people are sometimes in that condition, as that they cannot set themselves seriously to such a Duty as this is, but are very *awk* and *indisposed* hereunto. For the better understanding of this Point, we must know in what sense this work of Prayer is taken here by us : And that is not in the *latitude* and *extent* of it, for the making known of their Requests to God *some way* or *other* ; for that they are *always* able to do by the *assistance* of Gods *Holy Spirit* in them, as we shall hear, God willing, more hereafter. But we take it here a little more *strictly*, for the exercise and performance of Prayer in a more *solemn* and *enlarged* way : This they are not *always* able to do, but are now and then very much *hindered*, and *interrupted*, and *disturb'd* in it, that they cannot perform it.

And there are divers causes and occasions of this obstruction to them : As first, *Distempers of Body*, and the infirmities which arise from that. When the *Body* is out of frame, it puts the *Soul* out of frame also, and indisposes it to that which is good. People which are under sickness, can attend little but sickness it self many times, and the induring of the present pain ; Little leisure or list for other things. This was the case of *Hezekiah*, who whiles it was thus with him, says of himself, That (instead of praying) he did no more but chatter like a Crane or Swallow, and mourn as a Dove, *Esay* 38. 14. And so it is with many others besides.

Secondly, From *distraction of mind*, and perplexity of spirit : This does likewise very much disturb them in this particular. Thus *Heman* says of himself, That whiles he suffer'd Gods terrors, he was distracted, *Psal.* 88. 15. *Afunab Animi-pendeo*. He was at a loss with himself, and as it were at his wits-end, as the word signifies, which was a great hindrance to him.

Thirdly, From some *special Corruption*, and inordinate *Passion* which surprizes them : This does very much hinder them likewise. And this is that which we may observe in the Prophet *Jonah*, in *Chap.* 4. 2. It is said there that he prayed to the Lord, but it was in such a strange distracted manner, as we hardly ever read of the like in all the Scripture. Where there is any guilt upon the Conscience, it does very much hinder and obstruct mens prayers.

Lastly, Too much *Interest* and *Involution* in worldly affairs. This, if it be not the better heeded, and more carefully look'd unto, it will very

much *take off the mind* from such a business as *this is*. It will take up the time as to the *undertaking* of the performance; and it will take off the heart as to the *managing* of it. Where there is too much *ingaging* in the world, there will be either little *leisure* for holy Duties, or little *lift* to them; that so we may with the greater fear, and *jealousie*, and *caution*, and watchfulness over our selves, and dependance upon God for his Direction and Assistance of us, interest and concern our selves in such things as these are. Well, seeing this is so, that even the Servants of God themselves are sometimes very much to seek and indisposed as to this Holy Performance; this may therefore serve, first of all to teach us to observe the present opportunity, & to take time while time serves, seeing we may light into such conditions, as wherein we may not be able to pray, we should therefore neglect *no season*, which to this purpose is afforded unto us, *If Christians were more careful to pray when they might, they would be more able to pray when they should; but when they willingly, or carelessly withdraw from it, they are sometimes unwillingly, and against their minds obstructed in it.*

Secondly, Where it is at any time thus with us, we should accordingly be affected in it. First, to be *lumbled* for it, and to lay it to heart: There's nothing should more trouble a good Christian, than the Interruptions in his *Communion with Christ*; that he cannot come so freely into his presence as he desires to do. Secondly, to inquire into the *cause and occasion* of it, and to examine from whence it proceeds. In all Indispositions to Duty, it is good to see whether they arise in us from *natural Infirmities*, or from *spiritual Corruptions*; and especially whether we have not provoked God by some *miscarriage or neglect of Duty in us*. Thirdly, Not to lye down under them, but to strive and to labour to overcome them all we can: we have a very good course here in the Text prescribed unto us, which is, where we cannot pray, yet at least to sigh, and to send up our *secret complaints to God*, who in such a case will be ready to relieve us. There are some people which would have men never to pray, but when they find themselves well-disposed to it. But how long may they sometimes stay for that, and so not pray at all? No, but let us rather break through all difficulties and obstructions whatsoever, and by an holy violence force our selves upon the Duty in the midst of all *reluctancy*. As we are required sometimes to eat against stomach, for the better strengthening of Nature; so we are required to pray against stomach also, for the strengthening of Grace; And in that for the health of our Bodies; so this also of our Souls: Indeed we may not please our selves in any Indispositions which are upon us; but yet we may not occasionally from them be hinder'd from *indeavour*; which will at last prevail upon us.

And further, we see here what need we have to beg the help and assistance of others. Here is that which does very much advance the *Communion of Saints*; whereas Christians being not so able to pray themselves, have their Brethren praying for them, which is a great benefit and advantage to them; and the Lord does sometimes in his providence so order and dispose of it; That Christians should themselves be straitned, that so from them they may the more readily make use of the help one of another; and be thereby so much the more *indeared one*
to

to another, in the supply of each others failings. Here's no need of going to Saints departed, the Saints alive are *enow* to do it for us; And so much of the first piece of *Impotency* or Defect which is in the Servants of God now and then as concerning their Prayers, and that is of *Indisposition*, in reference to the *undertaking* of the Duty.

The second is of *Ignorance*, in reference to the *matter* of it. *We know not* (sayes the Apostle here) *what we should pray for*. Christians sometimes are to seek in *this*. This is that which our Saviour took notice of in the Sons of Zebedee; when they would that he should do for them whatsoever they *should desire*, and in particular that he would grant unto them, to *sit one at his right hand*, and the other at his left hand in his Glory. *Ye know not* (sayes he) *what ye ask*, Mark 10. 38. The like mistake is there sometimes in other Christians, and that in *sundry* particulars.

First, In asking things which are absolutely *sinful* and unlawful; They know not what they should pray for in *this*: As when through *Impatience* they shall desire their *own death* and destruction: It is a *sinful and unlawful* desire. Thus *Jonah*, Chap. 4. 3. when he had not what he wisht for, *Take away my life from me, for it is better for me to die then to live*. And so *Job*, Chap. 6. 8. *Oh that I might have my request, and that God would grant me the thing which I long for*. Here was a very earnest and vehement desire; And what do you think it was for? why, ye shall see in the verse immediately following, *Even that it would please God to destroy me: that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off*. This for themselves.

And so likewise for the destruction of their Enemies, when men shall rashly pray for *this*, as the two Disciples, that he would have call'd for fire from Heaven upon the *Samaritans*. It comes within the compass of this also, of things which are unlawful.

Secondly, In asking things which are *unseasonable*: There's a miscarriage in *this* also. There are some things which do well at *one time*, which do not so well at *another*. Every thing is beneficial in its *season*; now when there shall be an ignorance of *this*, there must needs be a *mistake*: And so there oftentimes is, whiles we ask such things as are not yet fitted for *us*, nor we for *them*, but must needs have them so soon as we think of them, or have a mind unto them.

Thirdly, In asking things which are *unsutable*, and inconvenient for us: At least which are *very uncertain*, and under very much hazard. We know not oftentimes what to ask, because we know not many times what it is which is *worth* the asking. For that which we may judge to be *very desirable*, it may in *conclusion* prove the *quite contrary*: Because we are not able to *dive into the depth and bottom* of things, nor to *discern things in their several circumstances* which are attendant upon them. There are many things which consider'd simply and absolutely in their *own nature*, may be *very good and comfortable*; yet if we take them as *thus and thus circumstantiated*, may be exceeding *pernicious*. That which is *one mans meat* (we say) is *another mans poyson*. And for those injoyments which may be good for *others*, they may not haply be so to *our selves*; according to the *diversity of conditions* in which we may be. Now forasmuch as we cannot know the *full latitude and extent* of Provi-

dence, therefore do we not alwayes know neither what it is which is to be asked for by us.

The consideration of this Point may be thus far useful to us :

First, As from hence to satisfie us in the *denial of those Petitions* which are sometimes made by us. It may so fall out with the *Children of God now and then*, as that they may ask some things in prayer which are not granted unto them. This may not any way *discourage* them, or cause them to fly off in *discontent*, but rather teach them to consider the *goodness* of God to them, who provides better for them then they are ready to provide for *themselves*; who are apt very ordinarily to *mistake* in those things which are ask'd by them, and to ask they know *not what*. But though we do not know what to ask; yet God knows what to give, and will give that only which is *best and most requisite for us*. Therefore we should rest our selves satisfied in that which he disposes to us, as one *who is wiser for us* then we can be for *our selves*. It is the happiness of the *Child*, who is but *weak and ignorant of himself*, that he hath a wise and understanding Father that knows what is good for him. And so it is accordingly the great happiness of the *Children of God*, if they could but discern their happiness, and be sensible of it, that they have the Lord Himself to contrive things for them, in the midst of their *own blindness and darkness*: Your Father which is in Heaven knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him, as our Saviour tells us, *Matth. 6. 8*. Yea, and he knows sometimes that we have *not* need of them when we ask them likewise. He knows that it is a great deal better for us to be without them, then it is to have them, and for this reason *withholds* them. This, I say, should very much quiet us and content us in any disappointment: We should not say, That God is backward in granting. No, but that we are ignorant in asking. He gives us what we would desire, if we rightly understood our selves, though he gives us not what we do desire, when we desire that which is amiss, *Exaudit non ad voluntatem sed ad utilitatem*, as St. *Austin* speaks: He hears not according to our Humour, but according to our Welfare; Not for our Pleasure, but for our Profit, and as may be best and most expedient for us. This is a most certain truth, and that which we shall find made good by experience, That God does never more effectually nor affectionately answer the prayers of his people, then he does sometimes in his denials of them; because therein he does them good (as we may say) whether they will or no. And accordingly it becomes them to take it from him, and to be patient under such denials: As for wicked men, God sometimes bears them in Judgment, and gives them those things which they desire, not so much in mercy as in wrath, as he did with the *Israelites*, when they askt for flesh to be given them for their lust; but for his Children he deals better with them.

Secondly, Forasmuch as of our selves; We know not what to pray for, we should therefore beg of God to direct us, and to suggest such things unto us as are fittest to be pray'd for by us. It is a great matter to know what to pray for, and that which is exceeding profitable and beneficial to us. As we may see in the example of *Solomon*, when he came first to the Kingdom, and asked of God that which was sutable and agreeable to his mind; he did not only obtain that which he asked, but together with it that which he did not ask, as supernumerary and additional to it, *1 Kings 3. 11*.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, This teaches us to ask nothing *absolutely*, but with submission to the Will of God. Forasmuch as we may *mistake* in our askings, therefore let us not be too much set upon *this*, at least as to the *things of the world*, and the concerns of *this present life*. As for *spiritual and heavenly concerns*, power over Sin, and strength against Temptation, and ability to Duty, and assurance of Favour, and at last injoyment of Heaven: Grace whereby to serve God here, and Glory wherein to be rewarded by him hereafter. Such things as these are, his Majesty has given us a liberty of being more earnest and importunate with him, and absolute in the desire of them. But as for any thing else which is here below, here he has restrain'd us: It is not safe for us to be peremptory in the begging of any worldly or temporal Blessing whatsoever, because we know not what to pray for. And that's the second defect in this performance, to wit, in reference to the matter of it, *what*.

The third is in the manner or carriage of it; *How*, and as we ought. This is another thing which Christians are sometimes apt to fail in; though they may persuade themselves and bring themselves off perhaps to the performance it self, and though likewise they may perhaps hit right upon the thing it self which is desired by them, yet moreover they may miscarry as to the managing and ordering of it.

What is it to pray as we ought? This I shall not now insist upon, we may take it briefly thus:

First, With pure affections, 1 Tim. 2. 8, We must lift up pure hands, without wrath and doubting: Where though the hands be mention'd, yet the heart is principally intended.

Secondly, With an holy importunity, Jam. 5. 16, The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man prevaieth much, as Elijah that prayed earnestly, &c.

Thirdly, With sense of Gods Majesty before whom we come, Heb. 12. 28, That we may serve God acceptably with reverence, and godly fear, &c.

Fourthly, With constancy and perseverance, Luke 18. 1. Praying always and not fainting. 1 Theff. 5. 17, Pray continually. And Col. 4. 2. Continue in prayer, &c.

Fifthly, With Faith and holy Confidence, James 1. 6. If any man ask anything, let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, &c. Go boldly to the Throne of Grace, Heb. 4. 16.

Lastly, For right ends; we must not only know what we pray for, but why. Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. These and the like qualifications do make up to us this praying as we ought.

Therefore we should especially look to *this* in such performances as these are, and consider how it is with us; we should not rest our selves in the simple performance of any Duty of Religion whatsoever, but have an eye to our manner of doing of it. Not our bare doing of it, but our doing of it so as we ought: In Preaching, to speak as we ought to speak, as it is, Ephes. 6. 19. In hearing, to take heed how we hear, Luke 8. 18. In giving of Alms, to take heed how we give them, Matth. 6. 1. And so in praying, to pray so as we ought. And where we find it to be otherwise with us then it should be, it concerns us to be affected with it, and humbled for it. There are many people who perhaps are apprehensive

five of their miscarriages in the omission of prayer, and other duties, and exercises of Religion, when they do not pray at all; yea, but we should be moreover sensible of our defects in the managing of our prayers, when we do not pray as we should, when we pray formally and customarily, and coldly and irreverently, and doubtingly, and corruptly, and the like: As knowing that the Lord will be sanctified in all those that draw near unto him, as he has told us in *Levit. 10. 3.* God is a jealous God, and as tender now of Prayer, as he was heretofore of Sacrifice. And therefore it concerns us to be as jealous and tender our selves in the performance of it. And so now I have done with the first Part of the Text, which is the Defect or Infirmary it self here mention'd, in these words, *For we know not what we should pray for as we ought.*

The second is the happy supply of this Defect, in these words; *But the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be utter'd.* Wherein again we have two particulars more: First, The help or assistance it self which is here vouchsafed; And that's in these words, *The Spirit it self maketh intercession for us.* Secondly, The conveyance of this assistance, or manner whereby it is effected, in these words, *With groanings which cannot be uttered.*

First, For the assistance it self; *The Spirit maketh intercession for us.* There's a two-fold intercession for us which we read of in Scripture: The one is the intercession of Christ Himself; And the other is the intercession of the Spirit of Christ. The former of these we read of in the 34th verse of this Chapter, speaking of Christ, *who also maketh intercession for us.* The latter we have here in this verse which we have now in hand: The one is an intercession for us, as it is a speaking in our behalf. And the other is an intercession in us, as it is an enabling of us to speak our selves. The Holy Ghost Himself makes intercession for us, so far forth as he helps us to pray. According to that expression in *Matth. 10. 20.* *It is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.* Hence in *Zech. 12. 10.* is he call'd the Spirit of Grace and Supplications, because the pouring forth of Supplications, it comes from the Spirit. So *Gal. 4. 6.* it is said, *That God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father.* And in the 15th verse of this present Chapter, the eighth of the *Romans*, He is call'd the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father. In these and the like places of Scripture, is the Holy Ghost set forth unto us, as the Helper and Promoter of our prayers, and as one that makes intercession for us. Now this we may conceive him to do by divers and sundry Operations:

First, By sanctifying of our persons, and putting us into such a capacity; as from whence we may with boldness draw nigh to the throne of Grace. The wise man tells us, *That the Sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, and that the Prayer of the upright (only) is his delight,* *Prov. 15. 8.* And the blind man in the Gospel also tells us, *That God beareth not Sinners; that is, such as live in their sins: But if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he beareth,* *John 9. 31.* It is a great matter in prayer, who it is that is employ'd in it: It is the prayer of a righteous person that availeth much, *James 5. 16.* Though we

we are not heard or accepted of God in prayer upon the account of our own *personal* Righteousness, but for the Righteousness of *Christ*; yet our *persons* must be righteous, or else we shall not be heard, or accepted of him in such a performance; We must have *Grace* to serve God acceptably. Now the *Holy Ghost* is he alone that does *work this Grace* in us, and so thereby does help us and enable us to pray. He is the Spirit of *Grace* and Supplication both together, as the Scripture declares him; but first the Spirit of *Grace*, and the Spirit of *Supplication*.

Secondly, By *putting* our hearts into a *praying* and *begging* frame. For though a man may be a *true Child of God*, and so fitted with a *general* qualification, in regard of his *Person*; yet he may not be alwayes in a *praying temper*, and so fitted for his *present disposition*. Therefore in reference hereunto does the *Holy Ghost* prepare the heart for this performance. This we have signified to us in *Psal. 10. 17.* *Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the Humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.* Where God will cause his own *Ear to hear*, he will there prepare his *Servants hearts to speak*.

Thirdly, By *suggesting* to us what at any time we shall *pray for*. Those who are acquainted with the Spirit of *Christ*, and do maintain communion with him, they shall find him *moving* of their hearts to ask those things which are most convenient for them. There's a *very great stroke* which the Spirit of God has with his Children in this particular: Either keeping them from *losing their labour*, and spending their breath in vain, where the thing shall not be done, or keeping them from losing an *opportunity*, and letting slip an occasion of asking where he intends the thing *indeed*, so as they may in part guess at that which he will grant, by what he stirs up in them first of all to ask.

This *answer of Prayer* is not only discover'd by the *event*, and when the thing it self is done, but also sometimes *before* by the operations of the same *blessed Spirit*. The *Spirit of God*, as it puts Christians upon asking those things which he himself intends to give them, so he does also secretly keep up their hearts in the *expectation* of those things which they have *ask'd*; yea, and also in some manner assure them of the obtaining of those things which they *expect*: *Then thou shalt call, & the Lord will answer: Thou shalt cry, and he will say, Here I am, Esay 58. 9. And Esay 65. 24, Before they call, I will answer; and whiles they are yet speaking, I will hear.*

Fourthly, By *stirring up such Graces* in us, as are requisite to the performance of prayer in a right and holy manner. Every religious performance has such Graces requisite for it, as are most proper and suitable to it; and so amongst the rest has this duty of prayer in its particular. There are several Graces to be exercised by us in this performance, as Faith, and Meekness, and Humility, and Love, and Zeal, and the like: Now the Spirit of God does not *only work these Graces* in us at first in the general qualification of our persons, but does also *excite these Graces* in us upon this occasion, whereby we may perform this duty so as we ought.

The Use of this Point to our selves comes to this:

First, What we have mention'd before upon another occasion; That there-

therefore we would take heed of doing any thing which may be *grievous or offensive* to this *Holy Spirit*, which is of *so great use* and concernment to us.

Secondly, It serves to give us an account of the different success of *Gods Children*, and other people in their prayer to God. As one is (as we shewed before) from the difference of their persons, so another is, which we have now before us, from the difference of their assistance: While the one undertakes this duty in the strength of their own spirit, the other is carried out in it by the help of the *Spirit of Christ*. This is the true ground and reason why the same prayer, for the matter of it, which is utter'd by several persons, has not alwayes the same entertainment, because it is not alwayes utter'd by the same spirit. As for example, take an instance of it in that which we call the *Lords Prayer*; In one mans mouth it shall be a meer *Formality*, in anothers it shall be an excellent Prayer; and all proceeding from a difference of Spirit in the managing and ordering of it. It is not so much a difference of voice or utterance, which does here alter the case, but the difference of heart and affection. God looking, not so much at that which here comes from us, as at the Spirit from which it comes in us. A man may pray formally and affectedly in conceiv'd prayer: And again, he may religiously and spiritually in premeditated and affectionately, and fixedly and determinedly; because the Spirit of God may possibly not breath in the former, and yet may breath in the latter. And he, and he alone prays indeed, and to purpose, in whom the Spirit it self breaths and makes intercession.

Thirdly, This may serve to teach us how to make our addresses to God in prayer upon all occasions, namely, so as desiring the help and assistance of his Spirit in those performances: Praying alwayes, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, as it is in *Ephes. 6. 18.* And again, Praying in the Holy Ghost, as it is in the Epistle of *Jude* and the 20. verse. This is chiefly to be looked after by us, which, that we may further rightly understand, we must distinguish of praying by the Spirit. There's a praying by the Spirit in the common Gifts of it, and there's a praying by the Spirit in the sanctifying: There's the Gift of prayer, and there's the Grace of prayer. The praying by the Spirit in the common Gifts of it, that lies especially in invention, and memory, and utterance, and elocution, and the like; and this may be found even in such persons as are unregenerate, and very eminently in them. But the praying by the Spirit in the sanctifying Gifts, that lies especially, as I hinted before, in Faith, and Love, and Humility, and Meekness, and in holy boldness and freedom with God, as of a Child with his Father. And this is proper and peculiar to those only who are the Children of God, who have the Spirit of God dwelling in them, and are by Faith united to Christ.

Fourthly, Here's that which may comfort us in all our own defects and infirmities, and indispositions to such a performance as this is which we speak of, whereas it is here exprest in the Text; *We know not what to pray for as we ought*; That if we be such as belong to God, we shall have his Spirit assisting of us, and supplying of those defects in us upon all occasions. This is the direct scope of the Text, and so the proper use of the Observation.

Lastly, It may serve by way of Caution, That we make not this truth now

now before us to be any way opposite or prejudicial to the *Deity and Divinity* of the *Holy Ghost*. It is that which some *Hereticks* of old have endeavour'd to make it; who because it is here said of the *Spirit*, that he does make intercession for us, would from thence infer, That he were *not God*. But this is no ground at all for such a conceit as that is: For when it is said here that he *makes intercession*, it is not so to be taken as if the *Holy Ghost* did *prostrate himself in his own person*; but only that he does help and assist us to pray for our particulars, by his *motions and operations in us*. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the *first Particular* in this passage, which is the *help or assistance* it self, which is here vouchsafed, *The Spirit it self making intercession for us*.

The *second* is the *Conveyances* of it to us, or the *manner* wherein it is effected. And that's in these words, *With groanings which cannot be utter'd*. By *groanings* here in this place, we are not only (as I conceive) to understand *secret complaints*, which do proceed from *bitterness of Spirit* in us, although these *principally* and *especially*. But by *groanings* we are here as well to understand any other *secret workings* of the heart towards God in converse and communion with him. Not only when we complain of any thing to him, but likewise when we ask any thing of him, or give him thanks for any thing which we have received. All the sudden and *secret dartings*, which we use to call *Ejaculations*, whereby the Soul does maintain a daily and constant *intercourse* betwixt God and it self; they are comprehended under these *groans* which are here mention'd, which are said to be such as are not or cannot be utter'd. Are not utter'd, being such as do not express themselves alwayes in speech and outward words, and the volubility of Language; and cannot be utter'd, that is, which are beyond all expression, for the greatness, and excellency, and transcendency of them.

That which we may observe from hence is this, That there may be Prayer sometimes there where yet there is not Speech, or vocal expression. A man may cry mightily to God, even there where sometimes he utters (as to the outward bearing of it) never a word. We have divers instances hereof in Scripture; Thus we know it was with *Moses*, when he was at the Red-Sea, *Wherefore cryest thou to me?* saith the Lord unto him, when as never a word came from him, *Exod. 14. 15.* And so *Hannah*, *1 Sam. 1. 13.* *She spake in her heart, but her voice was not heard.* The *Israelites*, it is said, *That they sighed and groaned, because of their bondage, and their cry came up unto God,* *Exod. 2. 23.* And again, *Exod. 3. 7.* *I have seen the Afflictions of my people, and have heard their groanings.* So *David*, *Psal. 38. 9.* *All my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee.* And *Psal. 39. 12.* *Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry, hold not thy peace at my tears.* His very tears they had a voice and speech with them, where his Tongue was altogether silent.

The ground of this Point is taken from the nature of prayer it self, as the Scripture does set it forth to us. Now how is that? we shall find it in *Phil. 4. 6.* Where we find it to be thus described, *A making known of our Requests to God*; then a man truly prays, when in a *sight and sense of his wants*, by the assistance of the holy spirit of God, stirring up *gracious affections* in him, he does in the Name and Mediation of *Jesus Christ*

K k k lay

lay open *his requests to the Lord*. Now this it may be done not only by *vocal expression*, but also in *the heart* and inward affection; and the reason of it is this, because *God* he searches *the heart*, and knows all the *windings and turnings* of it. He is a *spirit*, and hath communion especially with *our spirits*, and *they also* with him; so that now though we be *otherwise* silent, yet in *this* sense we may be able to *speak out*.

This for the Use of it, is first of all a very *great comfort* to all the true Children of God, as concerns their communion with him, where they are *hindred*, or at any time deny'd the opportunity of *outward expression*.

First, It is very satisfactory in a weakness and *defect of parts*, and *such and such Gifts*. There are many *good Christians* in the world, who though they have *honest and good hearts* in them, and *gracious spirits*; yet forasmuch as they want *utterance and language*, and memory and freedom of expression which they observe others to have *afore them*, are from hence ready to be discouraged in themselves, and so as to think that *they cannot pray*. Now such as these are *here to be inform'd* for their satisfaction in this particular, That prayer, it is not a work of the *Tongue*, or of the *Head*, but a work of the *Heart*: It is not so much a business of *Parts*, as of *Grace* and of *holy Affection*. He that can go to God as a *Father*, and commend his requests to him, though in never so *flammering a manner*, in regard of *outward expression*, so it be free from *rudeness*, and irreverence, &c. the Spirit of God intercedes in him.

Secondly, It is also comfortable in all *Afflictions and Distresses*. As in case of *sickness*, where men cannot speak, or at least have little *list* thereunto; In case of *Restraint and Persecution* from Enemies, Tyrants, and Executioners, and Tormentors, they may *forbid* a man to pray with his *Tongue*; yea, they may perhaps *pull out* his *Tongue*, that he shall not be able to pray at all with it. But they cannot hinder him from praying *with his heart*, and sending up of these *groans* here spoken of. This he will do, whether *they will or no*; so likewise in want of *retiredness*, when a man has not perhaps the liberty of *withdrawing himself alone*, nor cannot so freely, as he desires, pour forth his heart to God in words; yet he has this notwithstanding to help him, and thus far to satisfy him, that he may yet in the mean time lift up his heart to God in his private devotions, and thereby maintain his communion with him.

Last of all, In the *multitude of business*, and *variety of occasions* in the day, which take men up, that still they may *have converse with the Lord* in these frequent *Ejaculations* towards him; and so they ought to do as much and as often as they may do, seeing it has pleased God in his goodness to provide such an help and way as this for us, and given us such *faculties of mind and soul*, as whereby to perform it, we should be careful not to *neglect* it, but to improve it *all we can*. It is a very *great defect* and miscarriage in those, which are the Servants of God, when as they are *careless* in this particular. Beloved, *The life of our life* consists in our communion with God, which we maintain not only by the *set performances* of Prayer, *Morning and Evening*, which it is possible may be done sometimes as *meer tasks* which people have *set to themselves*, to be done by *them*, out of *custom* and example, and the power of *meer Education*, and such *principles* as these are. But we maintain this communion more
espe-

especially by a *daily, and hourly, and frequent, and constant lifting up of our hearts* to God in these *sighs and groans*, and so follow him, as that we will not let him go from us, or be one moment out of our sights. This is that, I say, which we may do, and this is that which we ought to do upon all occasions.

But yet this must also be *warily and cautiously* taken by us : That we *abuse not* such a Point as this is to *sluggishness and neglect*. Though this working of the heart in *groans and sighs* in some cases may be *prayer*, yet we are not to *content* our selves with this *alone*, where we have *further ability* and opportunity afforded unto us. There is required besides this also in its place, *further enlargement*, and an use of the *outward man*, in speech and gesture, and humble *prostration of the body* ; For which reason we find *prayer* to be described sometimes by the *bowing of the knee*, Ephes. 3. 4. And accordingly it has occasionally been practis'd by the Servants of God in this duty ; As our Saviour Himself, in *Luke* 22. 41. *He kneel'd down and prayed* ; And Paul himself, *Act.* 20. 26. *He kneel'd down and prayed* : But the *main and principal* part of prayer it lies in the *inward frame* of the Spirit.

Therefore secondly, We see how *much they are mistaken*, which satisfy themselves in the bare outward performance without the inward, or content themselves in a *meer enlargement* of words and phrases, and outward expressions, without any *inward moving of the heart* ; such as these do exceedingly *deceive themselves* (and others also) in this particular. Prayer is another kind of business then the world thinks it, or takes it to be. It is one thing to *talk* to God, and it is another thing to *pray* to him ; which is here in the Text expressed by *groaning which cannot be utter'd*.

Where again, we must further take heed, that we be not mistaken neither. There's a double *groaning or sighing* which a man is capable of in prayer : The one as a work of *Nature* ; and the other as a work of *Grace* : The one as coming but from *his own spirit*, the other as coming from the *Spirit of God* in him. Now it is not the former, but the latter, which should be chiefly here minded by us.

These two kind of *groanings* may be thus far differenced and distinguished to us, and discern'd by us. Those that come from *Nature*, they have only natural *causes* as the ground and foundation of them.

As first, *Groanings* in *natural men*, they proceed only from the sense and feeling of *present pain and misery* ; but in the *godly*, they proceed also from the sense and feeling of the *burden of sin*.

Secondly, *Natural groanings*, they proceed but from a *natural knowledge*, and *common apprehension of God*, which has been sometimes even in *Heathens themselves* ; but *spiritual sighs and breathings* from more *intimate acquaintance* with him.

Thirdly, They are distinguished also in the effects and consequents of them : For *natural groanings* they rest *in themselves*, and have no *further influence* with them ; but *spiritual groanings* draw men *nearer to God*, and perfect their communion *with Him*. Whatsoever is *in us* which comes from him, it carries us and knits us nearer to him. So much for that, and so also of this whole verse.



SERMON XXX.

R O M. 8. 27.

And he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh Intercession for the Saints, according to the will of God.

There are two things especially which are the great concernment of such Persons as do at any time present Petitions. There's the framing of them, and there's the granting of them; That they be such as are skilfully drawn by those that present them. And that they be such as are cheerfully taken by those that receive them: And both of these do very happily concur and meet together in this Scripture, which we have still in hand, as the great Priviledge and Advantage of the Saints and Servants of God in their Prayers and Addresses to Him at the Throne of Grace. That they may be such as are rightly fram'd; they have the Spirit of God Himself to indite them, and to draw them for them. For we know not what we should pray for, as we ought; but the Spirit it self maketh Intercession for us with groanings which cannot be utter'd, in the 26th. Verse of this Chapter, which we dispatcht the last day. And that they may be such as are easily granted, they have the same Spirit also to promote them, and to give his furtherance to them; For he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the Saints according to the will of God, In this Verse which we have now before us, and at this time with Gods Assistance to be handled by us.

IN the Text it self there are two general parts considerable; First, The Person mention'd. Secondly, The Action which is attributed unto this Person. The person is God himself, who is described from one of his Essential and Incommunicable properties; And that is of Him that searcheth the hearts. The Action attributed to this Person; that's express'd in these words, *knoweth what is the mind of, &c.*

We begin with the first of these Parts, viz. The person mention'd, and that under this Description of Him, that searcheth the Hearts. This is that which God Himself doth, and He alone. This is the point which is here observable of us, and at this time to be taken notice of by us: when it is said here, That he searcheth the heart; The meaning of it is no more but

but this, that *he knoweth the heart*, forasmuch as we by searching do ordinarily attain to right knowledge. And so it is a *Metonymie* of the *Efficient*, and an expression after the manner of men: Not as if God did properly search, or inquire into any thing, which he needeth not do (all things being open before him) but because this is usual amongst men, whereby they come to the discovery of those things which are known by them; therefore by way of resemblance it is also attributed unto God: Though that which is intended by it is only this, *That the Lord knoweth the heart* in all the turnings and windings of it. And this is a Point which the Scripture does abundantly make good to us in sundry places; Thus Jer. 17. 10, *I the Lord search the heart and try the reins*, Act. 1. 24, *Thou Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men*, 1 Chro. 28. 9, *The Lord knoweth all hearts, and understandeth all the Imaginations of the thoughts*. And many such places besides to the like effect.

This must needs be so upon a various account; First, In regard of his *Omniscience*: He knows all things, therefore amongst the rest, he must likewise know the heart of man. It was the argument of Peter to Christ, Job. 21. 17, *Lord, thou knowest all things, and therefore thou knowest that I love thee*. He that is acquainted with all things, he cannot be ignorant of our thoughts. Now this is God, Jer. 32. 19, *Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the Sons of Men*, Heb. 4. 13, *All things are naked and open unto the Eyes of him with whom we have to do; neither is there any Creature which is not manifest in his sight*. And what follows from hence? Namely, as we may gather from the Context; that therefore he is a Discerner of the *Thoughts and Intents* of the heart. He knows them by the *Infiniteness* of his Essence; All the thoughts which do at any time pass through us, whether past, present, or to come, they are all known of God: He knows our thoughts as far off, as David speaks, in Psal. 139. 2.

Secondly, The Lord must needs know the heart, because it is he only that made it. Who does know any piece of Workmanship better than He that is the Artificer of it? Suppose a Watch or any such thing, He that fram'd it must needs be acquainted with all the windings and turnings of it. And so the Psalmist seems to reason, Psal. 94. 9, 10, *He that planted the Ear, shall he not hear? And he that formed the Eye, shall he not see? And he that teacheth man Knowledge, shall he not know? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity*. Where we find Gods knowledge of the Heart to be founded upon his making of it. He that made it, he must needs know it.

Thirdly, It is the Lord which does guide it and order it, and has the disposing of it. The Lord must needs know the thoughts because they are very much acted, and carryed on by him; especially such thoughts as are good in us. He has a special influence upon these, we are not here sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves; but our sufficiency is of God.

Lastly, The Lord must needs know the heart, because he shall judge every one, and that according to his heart, as Christ tells the Church of Thyatira, Revel. 2. 23, *I am he that searcheth the heart and reins, and I will give unto every one of you according to his works*. And we meet with the same Expression likewise in the place before cited, Jer. 17. v. 10.

But

But here it may perhaps be demanded, whether *others* besides God may not be sometimes capable of this Knowledge likewise? What may we here think of *Angels* and some discerning *Men*? To this I answer, That none can know the heart *but God alone*. This is the property of the *Almighty*, to be the *searcher of the Heart*. And it is put here in this Text which we have now in hand; not only *simply*, but *exclusively*: Making it to be such a Description of the *Divine Majesty*, as wherein none but Himself is included: But yet for the better clearing of this Point unto us, we must take it with this *further Explanation*.

First, It is true of *God Originally*; He *searches and knows the heart alone*, by the power of *his own nature*, and an *immediate excellency*, which is *in Himself*; though *others* may in some sense also know it by *participation*, and derivation from him. This holds good in that *Spirit of Discerning* which is communicated now and then to *some kind of persons*, whether we take it in an *ordinary*, or an *extraordinary* way of *Dispensation*.

For the *Extraordinary*, It is that which is observable in the *Prophets and Apostles* of former times. The *Prophets*, as *Sammuel to Saul*, I will tell thee all that is in thine heart, 1 Sam. 9. 9. So *Elisba* likewise to *Gebazi*; *Went not my heart with thee*, &c. and he told him what he had done. The *Apostles*, as *Peter of Ananias*, *Why hath Satan filled thy heart*, &c. Act. 5. 3. And again, of *Simon Magus*; *Thine heart is not right in the sight of God*; for I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of Iniquity, Act. 8. 21. 23. Thus had these the *Spirit of Discerning* in an *Extraordinary* way of *Dispensation*.

But further, Take it also for the *Ordinary*, and there are those who have it likewise in some measure at this present time, who by a *special gift* which is bestowed upon them, and by *comparing of one thing with another*, are able to say very much to the *Spirit and Disposition* of others with whom they converse; According to that of *Solomon*, Prov. 20. 5. *Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out*. Though the well be deep, yet there is a bucket which will fetch up the water: And such now is a *Discerning spirit* to a *retired* and a *reserved heart*. The *Spirit of a Man*, is the *Candle of the Lord*, *searching all the inward parts of the belly*, as 'tis in Prov. 20. 27.

Secondly, It is true of *God Universally*. The *Lord*, he so *knows the heart*, as that he knows all the *windings and turnings* of it. *Man*, he knows only some *particulars*, as it pleases *God* to reveal them to him, but the *Lord* he knows them all. *There's not a Word in my tongue* (says *David*) *but thou, O Lord knowest it altogether*; that is, knowest it antecedently in my very thoughts, which are preparatory to it, and productive of it, Psa. 139. 4.

Thirdly, It is true of *God Infallibly*, whereas men, yea, even *Devils* themselves, they know it *but conjecturally*; And so indeed do not properly *know it*. It is true, that *Satan* by reason of his *Natural sagacity*, and through his *subtil insinuations*, being himself a *spirit*, is able to do very much in this particular. He may know those *thoughts of the mind*, which he himself *suggests*, and *propounds*, and *casts into it*: *Thoughts of Atheisms*, and *Blasphemy*, and the like; And for *others* he may likewise sometimes.

sometimes *guess* at them. But certainly and infallibly to determine what our secret thoughts are; this is a business out of his reach. So that this *Doctrine* it holds still in force. That the Lord alone is the searcher of the heart. The Consideration of this Point is useful to us to sundry purposes for which it may be improved by us; more particularly as we may reduce it to these two Heads, in a way either of *Counsel* or *Consolation*; First, In a way of *Counsel*, and that thus; Seeing this is so, That the Lord is the searcher of the heart; we see here then how far it concerns us more especially to look to our hearts, and to see that they be right in us. Those who think they shall at any time be searched, they are commonly more careful of themselves; and so it should be with us in this particular: And that in divers respects.

First, In matter of *Duty*; that our heart be right here. There are many Persons who please themselves sometimes in the things which are done by them, but never regard their hearts in them; Yea, but now they must know that the Lord, he looks at this. He observes not only mens *Actions*, but likewise their *Affections*: and that disposition of Spirit which is in them in such performances.

Thus for *Hearing of the Word*, He observes what it is which brings men to such places and performances as those are, whether they come out of custom and formality, and curiosity, and vanity, and the like for worldly and carnal ends; either to shew themselves, and to look about them, to see, or to be seen; or whether they come out of *Conscience* and *Duty*, for Gods glory and their own spiritual advantage; as when the people came to the bearing of Christ, Joh. 6. 26. He discern'd their hearts in them coming to him, how far forth it was amiss in them. And so he still does in any others besides. And what we speak now of *Hearing*, is applicable to any other Duty besides of Religion; if we be false in it, Shall not God search this out, for he knoweth the secrets of the heart: as the Church there reasons concerning her self, and her own carriage, Psal. 44. 21.

And so as for the manner of Duty, so likewise for the undertaking of it, it's useful to us here, to put us upon it, and to keep us from shifting it off upon pretence of want of ability or opportunity for it. This is that which some kind of persons are sometimes subject unto in businesses of any difficulty, or hazard, or disadvantage: Here there's a Lyon in the way, and twenty excuses and devices are found out to free themselves from it. Well, but God he is not mocked; but he knows how far forth men are sincere, or false in such cases, whether their excuses be real, or only pretended and imaginary in them. Hear what Solomon sayes to this purpose, and it is a place of special Consideration, Pro. 24. 11, 12. If thou forbearst to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain: If thou sayest behold we knew it not. Doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? And he that keepeth thy Soul, doth not he know it? And shall not he render to every man according to his work? The scope of this place is this, to meet with the falseness of mens hearts in those vain excuses which are made by them for the shifting of any business or service which is to be done by them; whether it be a work of piety, or a work of Charity, or the like, which themselves have no mind to; That though men it may be cannot convince them; yet the Lord knows their hearts; And thus

is this Point improvable by us, as to matter of *Duty* which is required of us.

Secondly, In *matter of Sin*, and that which is *forbidden* to us. It is very useful here also, seeing the Lord searches the heart, we should therefore make *Conscience* of our thoughts, and such Sins as go no further than *them*: There are many, who if they abstain from *Afts* and the *External Commissions of wickedness*, Murther, and Adultery, and Theft, and such as *these*, they think they have done a *great matter*, whiles yet in the mean time they allow themselves in *such thoughts* as tend hereunto. Thoughts of *maliciousness*, and thoughts of *Covetousness*, and thoughts of *uncleanness*; they have their *Speculative and Contemplative wickedness* which they favour themselves in. Now let such as these consider with themselves; that he that *searcheth the heart* he will call them to an account for these: And therefore as *St. Peter* sometimes counsell'd *Simon Magus*, let them pray to God, if so perhaps the *thought of their heart* may be forgiven unto them, *Act. 8. 22*. And that upon this account; because as *Solomon* tells us, *Even the thought of foolishness is sin*, *Pro. 24. 9*. Therefore let them *wash their heart from their wickedness*, as the Lord counsels *Jerusalem*, *Jer. 4. 14*. And where we are ignorant of hearts, either *our own*, or *other mens*; here's a good rule of direction to us, what course is to be taken by us; namely, to have recourse to him who is the *searcher* of, and so is able to discover them to us, as there's occasion for it. For our own hearts, where we know not them in regard of the natural uncertainty and deceitfulness in them, here to go to God to this purpose, as *David* himself did before us, *Psal. 139. 23, 24*. *Search me O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting*. Seeing the Heart is deceitful above all things, therefore above all things go to him who *is the Searcher and discerner of the heart*.

And so for *other mens hearts*, so far forth as it concerns us any thing to know them, to go to God for the *discovery of them*, as the *Apostles* did there in the *Afts*, when they were to make choice of a *new one* into their number, and pitch'd upon *two persons* for their *Election*, either *Barsabas*, or *Matthias*, *They pray'd, and said, Lord, Thou who knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen*, *Act. 1. v. 24*.

And further, it should teach us *Charity and Modesty* in our censure of others; especially in such things as are doubtful, and matters of uncertainty, that we do not here too suddenly and peremptorily pass our censure upon them; because our selves know not their *hearts*, nor are not able to dive into them, which is the property of *God alone* to do. And thus may we make use of this Point in a way of *Counsel and Direction*.

Now further secondly, It is improvable also in a way of *Comfort and Consolation*, and that in divers particulars; First, in a want of opportunity for the doing of that Good which we desire. The Servants of God sometimes have a very *earnest desire* in their Souls of doing many good things which yet they have not the *advantage or ability* of effecting, or bringing to pass. But this in the mean time may satisfy them, that the Lord knows

knows their *hearts* and *minds* in it : Thus ye know it was with *David* ; when he desired to build the *Lord an house* , the Lord in his Providence restrain'd him from it , but yet he took it well at his hands that he was minded to do it : As we have it in 2 *Chro.* 6. 8. The Lord said unto him, *Forasmuch as it was in thy heart to build an house unto my Name, thou didst well, that it was in thine heart.* Mark, It is said, that he *did well* when it was but in his heart : Namely, when he had no further ability or opportunity of doing it. Where we have abilities and opportunities of doing good, there the heart will not serve the turn without the *actual* performance ; nay, whatever men may pretend to the contrary, it is not at all in good earnest in their hearts, without this Activity, but where ability is really wanting, God accepts of the will for the deed, *because he searches the heart* : If there be first a *willing mind*, it is accepted according to *that which a man hath, and not according to that which he hath not*, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12.

Secondly, As this is a Comfort to Gods Children in the *straitness* of their own opportunities, so likewise in the censures and misconstructions of other men ; when they shall be apt to tax them and vilifie them, and lay load upon them, that in the mean time, the Lord knoweth their hearts ; thus Paul in 1 *Cor.* 4. v. 3, 4, 5. *But with me it is a very small thing to be judged of you ; he that judgeth me, is the Lord, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and manifest the counsels of the heart.* And so Job, *My witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high*, cap. 16. ver. 19. This is a comfort in *secret Goodness*, and such as the world takes no notice of. That it shall not be altogether unrewarded by God, who searches the *very hearts*, and the *secrets* and *recesses* of it. The Lord that sees in *secret*, he will reward *openly*, as our Saviour himself has told us in case of *secret prayers*, and *Alms*, and so we may make account of it : As men have no cause to be encouraged in *secret wickedness*, forasmuch as God beholds it ; so neither have they cause to be discouraged in *secret goodness*, because he beholds it also.

Again, In the Temptations of *Satan*, who is called the *Accuser of the Brethren*, and is said to accuse them before our God day and night, Revel. 12. 10. What a great comfort is it that God searcheth the heart. For by this means, shall he never be able to bring him out of love with his people, who knows them well enough, whiles he searches their hearts, and sees that *Satan* does no more but slander them, and falsely accuse them for that which is not chargeable upon them.

And so for our selves, when we do not alwayes so clearly discern our own estate and condition in *Grace* ; yet to say, Lord, thou see'st how it is with me, as Peter sometimes to Christ ; God sometimes sees that Good in his Children which they at present do not discern in themselves. And so now I have done with the first general Part of the Text, which is the Person mention'd, and that is God himself, described from the essential property of him that searcheth the hearts.

The Second is the *Action* attributed unto this Person in these words, *Knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit* ; because he maketh intercession for the Saints, according, &c. wherein again we have two Branches more : First, The *Action* it self, Secondly, The *Reason* or *Object* which it is conversant about. The *Action* it self that's in these words, *Knoweth*

what is the mind of the Spirit; The Reason or Object in these, because, or that he makes Intercession for, &c.

First, To speak of the former; namely, the Action it self *Knoweth*, &c. And this again, it may be taken two manner of wayes; either first of all *Notionally*, for a knowledge of *Apprehension*: Or secondly, *Affectionately*, For a knowledge of *Approbation*, he knows what is the mind of the Spirit, so as to *understand* it. And he knows what is the mind of the Spirit, so as to *approve* it: In each of these senses he is said to *know* it.

First, Take it *Notionally*, and by way of *Apprehension*. The Lord who is the searcher of hearts *knoweth*; that is, *understandeth* what is the mind and meaning of the Spirit, in those imperfect *Sighs* and *Groans* which do at any time come from us. And this is very fitly brought in by way of *opposition* to that which went before in the former Verse, *We know not*, sayes the Apostle, *what we should pray for as we ought in such and such conditions*. Nor we do not so fully *understand* our selves in such and such *Petitions*, through the *weakness* and *infirmity* which is in us; yea, but the Lord he knows it, and understands it *well enough*, and is able perfectly to discern it, and to discover it, what it is.

Secondly, Take it *Affectionately*, and by way of *Approbation*: And so the Lord who is the searcher of the hearts, and so sees that good which is in it, he knows, that is, *approves of the Graces and good Affections* of his people in the midst of those manifold *weaknesses* and *imperfections* which they are mingled withall in them. He knows them so as to accept them.

But here a Question may be made what *Spirit* it is which is here meant when it is said, *That God knoweth the mind of the spirit*, whether *our own Spirit*, or the *Spirit of God*? To this I answer, that we are hereby to understand *directly* the *Spirit of God*, yet with reference also to *our own Spirit* which is involv'd in it, and with it: It is *terminatively our own Spirit*; But it is *Originally* the *Spirit of God*, and there is *this sense* in it; that God knows what is *Spirit* and *Grace* in us *distinct* from what is *Flesh*, and *Corruption* in those *prayers*, which we put up unto him; so as though our *Petitions* sometimes may be full of much *distraction* and *confusion*, in regard of the *Condition*, which we may be in; yet the Lord he does well enough understand the meaning of them, and does approve of that which is *his own* and *spiritual* in them.

This is a Point which may be laid forth to us, according to sundry Instances, and Explications of it; as,

First, In difficulty of utterance, and restraint of words, and outward Expressions. It may so fall out sometimes with many of the *Saints and Servants of God*, who are very near and dear unto him, and have very much interest in him, as that they may not have that *gift and faculty* of so freely expressing themselves in Speech and Language: Their words may *stick in their teeth*, and not come off so *roundly* from them? Now what does the Lord in this case reject their Prayer for *this defect* which is in them? No, by no means, He knows the mind of the Spirit notwithstanding, where *others* are able sometimes to *make nothing* of it, and hardly *themselves*; yet does the Lord fully apprehend it, and know what it means, *As a Father even the stammerings of his Children*.

Secondly,

Secondly, As in Difficulty of Utterance, so also in Distraction of Spirit, which is mainly here intended in this Scripture. Gods Children are many times in that Condition, through some Affliction or Calamity, which is upon them, as that they cannot make their Prayers to God in any good order or method at all; but one word trips up another, and a great deal of *confusedness* there is in them in such cases as these are. Why, but God's still a *gracious* God in the mean time, and *knows the mind* of the Spirit in his Children: He can put those broken speeches together, and make very good sense of them, even there where consider'd in themselves they are very *inconsistent*. He tenders the *broken speeches*, which are the effects of a *broken spirit*: This, I say is a very great Encouragement to Gods Children in such conditions; we many times judge of prayer, according to some *external enlargements*, the variety of Matter, the excellency of Voice, the volubility of Language, and such things as these are; but God judges of it by the *frame of our spirits*, which where they are meek, and humble, and gracious, and full of holy affection in us, he regards them under much perplexity and distraction, which is otherwise upon them, *The Sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart O God thou wilt not despise*, Psal. 51. 17.

Thirdly, In case of *forgetfulness*, where somewhat is left out of the Prayer, which was intended to be put into it: The Lord knows the mind of the Spirit in this respect also. A Child of God sometimes sets himself to prayer, and to pour forth his Soul to God in this performance, and in the very time and minute of praying it may be he does not think of all things which he intended in his first setting about it; what do we think that this now shall be any hinderance or prejudice to him, in regard of that which he asks of God in prayer. Surely no such matter, his purpose shall be here taken for his performance, and because God knows what is the mind of the Spirit, therefore he will put in that for him, which he forgot to put in himself. God does not only hear our prayers, but he hears our desires, which our Prayers do not sometimes reach to; according to that of the Prophet, *Esay 65. 24, And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear*. God gives us not only the things which we do expressly ask of him, but also which we would have asked and prayed for, if we had but thought upon them: Thus *Psal. 37. 4. It is said, Delight thy self in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart*. Not only the desire of thy mouth, but the desire of thy soul, which thy mouth has not yet express'd. And so the Church prays for David, *Psal. 20. 4, The Lord grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel*. And *Psal. 21. 2, Thou hast given him his hearts desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips*; where the request of the lips, and the desire of the heart are distinguish'd.

This is not so to be taken, as if we were wilfully to omit any thing in our Petitions to God, because he is ready of himself to make it up; For as he *knows our desires*, so we are to make known our requests to him, as the Apostle requires of us, *Philip. 4. 6. But where we do unawares let slip any thing which is desirable of us, we have this supply from Gods goodness to us*.

No, nor secondly, does this warrant any wilful *roavings* or *wandrings* of mind in Prayer; That because God knows the mind and meaning of the Spirit, therefore we should let our tongues loose we care not how, for want of serious composing and setting our selves to the Duty in hand; but if distraction creeps upon us unawares, or we are hindered and interrupted by Satan, or have any natural weakness or forgetfulness upon us: This is that which may comfort us, that God knoweth the mind of the Spirit.

Fourthly and lastly, In the *mistake* of our Prayers, for the *subject* and *matter* of them, and the things which we desire in them. God knows the mind of the Spirit in this sense also; Gods Children as they consist partly both of Spirit and Flesh, so they are to be supposed to put up petitions in a sort favouring of either; now the Lord in this case looks not so much at the *one* as at the *other*. For example, we sometimes desire those things which are hurtful and inconvenient for us; yea sometimes sinful and unlawful, as I have formerly shewn, because we know not what to pray for as we ought, to wit, being left to our selves, and our own private spirits: now the Lord he attends not to this, being a relick of the flesh in us, but he looks at our better part; and that which we would desire, if we did mind it, and did act the principles of Grace vvhich are in us; that is that which he does vouchsafe unto us, and does bestow upon us in the carriage of himself towards us. And this (as I conceive) is in a special and principal manner intended here in this place, as we may guess from that which follows in the Text; because he makes intercession for the Saints, according to the will of God. The meaning of it is this; We through the strength of Passion and Corruption of Nature which is in us, are apt to desire many things, which are not so fitting or requisite for us: But now the Lord knows that the regenerate part in us is otherwise affected, and that so far forth, as we are any thing spiritual, and have his Spirit taking place in us, so far forth we are guided by his will in the Prayers that come from us: And this is that which he has a special eye and regard unto; The Lord knows the mind of the Spirit; that is, he knows that if we did walk by the rules of that Grace which is put into us, and the guidance of his Spirit in us, we would desire other kind of things then at present are ask'd by us; And therefore he deals with us so, as those that did indeed ask such kind of things only as those.

This is another piece of that comfort and encouragement, which does belong to Gods Children: That the Lord passes over that which is flesh in them, and looks only at that which is spirit: He does not so much attend to those weaknesses, which we our selves sometimes discover in those sinister and exorbitant petitions, which are now and then made by us, as he does rather to the Grace of his own spirit, which is secret and hid in us. And from hence he comes to bestow no other than good things upon us: If the Lord should mind the Flesh, and take notice of that in somethings which we in some circumstances desire of him, it would many times go very ill with us, and we should be but in a sad condition: But now he is better to us in this case, than we are to our selves, or then we desire indeed he should be to us; such is his goodness and mercy towards us. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the first particular in this

this *second general* ; to wit, the action it self in these words, *Knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit.*

The second is the *reason or object* which this action is conversant about, and that is in these words, *Because, or that* he makes intercession for the *Saints, &c.* I read it both wayes, because the Greek word *in* will admit of both, as our own translation here renders it ; referring to the knowledge of apprehension, and referring to the knowledge of approbation : The one in the *Margin*, and the other in the *Text*. As for the *Spirits intercession*, we have spoken of that already, as ye know, out of the verse before, so that we shall need to say the less of it here ; only there are two things especially which are here considerable of us : First, The *qualification of the persons* to whom the benefit of this intercession extends ; And they are said to be *Saints*. Secondly, The *manner* of this performance, in which this intercession is carried ; According to the *will of God*.

We begin with the first, *viz.* The *qualification of the persons*, The *Saints, in v. 27.* The Apostle in the verse before had said for *us* ; Here now he adds for the *Saints* ; that so he might shew under what notion, and upon what account, the intercession mention'd, becomes available to *us*. And it affords us this *Observation* which arises out of it, That none can pray truly and effectually, but only the *Saints* : It is the *Saints, emphatically*, and it is the *Saints exclusively*, for whom the Spirit makes intercession. Thus Psal. 32. 6, *For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayst be found.* Prov. 15. 8, *The prayer of the upright is his delight.* Psal. 145. 19, *He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him.*

And there is this ground for it :

First, Because such as these only are accepted and beloved of God. The granting of requests and petitions is a matter of special favour to those to whom it is vouchsafed ; every one is not fit to obtain it. Now there are none which are in favour with God, but only the *Children of God* ; which are *Saints*, and have the Image of his Holiness stamp'd and imprinted upon them, and are partakers of it. These alone are true *Jedidiahs*, beloved of the Lord, as it was said of Solomon. And so alone are such as are accepted of him in Prayer and Supplication to him : As we may see in the account which is given hercof by the Angel to Daniel, Chap. 9. 23, *At the beginning of thy supplications the Commandment came forth (namely, for the performance of them) and I am come to shew (it) to thee, for thou art greatly beloved :* Or as it is in the Hebrew Text, *Anan of desires.* Those that are men of desires, they are most likely to have their desires answer'd ; and such only are the *Saints*.

Secondly, As such only are accepted, so such only are fit Subjects and Instruments for the Holy Spirit to work in to this purpose. When we read here of the *Spirits intercession*, and of his stirring up of sighs and groans in the hearts of those that make their prayers to God ; we must not conceive or apprehend, as if this were the first work which was wrought upon them, and as if the Holy Ghost did begin with this business before any thing else : No, but it is consequent, and following to a former work which is begun in them. This is the usual method and order which is observ'd by him to this purpose : First, To sanctifie, and then to intercede : Secondly,

Secondly, To put gracious dispositions *into us*, and then to stir up holy desires in us: And the latter it supposes the former. In whom he is a Spirit of Intercession to plead for them; in them he is a Spirit of Regeneration to beget them *anew*. And therefore (as I have formerly shewn) they are joyned both of them together: *The spirit of Grace and Supplication*, Zech. 12. 10.

Thirdly, None *but Saints* have an interest in the blood of *Christ*, as more particularly applied unto them, and *His* Intercession working for them. None are able to pray *themselves*, whom *Christ* does not pray for likewise. Now these are only such as are *Saints*: *I pray for these* (saies he) *I pray not for the world*, John 17. 9. And Revel. 8. 4, *Christ* is said to offer up the prayers of all *Saints* (Signanter) upon the Golden Altar.

The consideration of this Point should therefore teach us to prize holiness both in our selves and in others, as that without which prayer it self, which is so commendable a Service, is not accepted: *We know that God heareth not sinners*, but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his Will, him he heareth, John 9. 31. He that turneth away his ear from bearing of the Law, even his prayer shall be abominable, Prov. 28. 9.

This should further teach the Saints to improve that interest which they have in God upon all occasions; and to do all that, possibly they can with him, in the behalf of his poor Church especially: *Ye which are the Lords Remembrancers keep not silence, and give him no rest day nor night*, &c. as it is in Esay 62. 6, 7. The more godly that any men are, the more should they bestir themselves with God for the publick Good, because these are likeliest of all others to prevail with him, whiles they have a double advantage upon them; both of the thing or persons themselves prayed, and of the persons also praying for them. As *Martha* and *Mary* which were both of them beloved of *Christ*, commending to him the sick condition of *Lazarus*, whom *Christ* also loved.

Again, from this passage here before us, we may collect the true nature of prayer, which lies not so much in Gifts as in Graces, and is a work of the Spirit in the sanctifying operations of it. And thus much of this Particular, which is the qualification of the persons; to wit, the Saints.

The second is the manner of the performance, according to God, *agere deus*, which we translate, according to his Will. This Point from hence is this, That then and then alone are our Prayers likely to be successful, when they are made according to God. The expression, *According to God*, does include divers things in it, which is here by our Translators very pertinently and comprehensively exprest by his will. Our prayers, if ever they speed, they must be made thus. Thus 1 John 5. 14, 15, *This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.*

This praying according to the will of God does include divers things in it:

First, The matter of our prayers, that it be of such things as are lawful and warrantable: That which is contrary to God's commanding will, it cannot be agreeable to his approving will.

Secondly, For the manner of them, that they be carried with that spirit

spirit and affection which he does allow of, and especially in the Name and Confidence of Christ the Mediator : Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you, John 16. 23.

Thirdly, For the *end* of them, and that which we propound to our selves in them, which is the *Glory of God* : *Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss ; that ye may consume it upon your lusts, Jam. 4. 3.*

This is first of all *cashieres* all such prayers as do *swerve* from this will of God, whether for *matter, manner, or end*, as we have now mention'd. *Superstitious* prayers, which are put up in a *wrong mediation*, as of *Angels* and of *Saints departed*. *Presumptuous* prayers, as those which are made for such persons as are *deceased*. *Wicked* prayers, as such which are made for the promoting of any *evil design*. *Formal* prayers, which are made *carelessly, and negligently, and coldly*, without any life or *spiritual vigor*.

Secondly, Seeing those prayers *alone* are acceptable, which are made according to the will of God, it does from hence nearly concern us to be well instructed in this Will, and to know what it is : *To learn what is that good and acceptable will of God*, as the Apostle Paul advises us, *Rom. 12. 2.* And again, *Not to be unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is*, in *Ephes. 5. 17.*

Thirdly, This gives us an account of it, whence our prayers sometimes are not heard, because not according to *this will*. So much for that, and so also for the whole 27th ver. *But he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth, &c.*

S E R M O N.



S E R M O N XXXI.

R O M. 8. 28.

And we know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

There is nothing more necessary for Christians, then to be well perswaded of the happineſs of their Condition, and of the Priviledges which do belong unto them upon the account of Christianity it ſelf, whereby they may be able to ſerve God with greater chearfulneſs and freedom of ſpirit, and to paſs through the Troubles and Difficulties which they may meet withall here in the world. And this is that which we have here exhibited to us in this verſe which we have now before us as another argument produced by the Apoſtle, for comfort againſt the bitterneſs of the Croſs, and thoſe Afflictions which here in this life are incident unto us. And that is taken from the bleſſed iſſue of all events whatſoever to Believers; wherein Afflictions amongſt the reſt are included as a certain and unqueſtionable truth, and manifeſt determination: We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called, &c.

IN the Text it ſelf there are *two general parts* conſiderable; Firſt, *The propoſition it ſelf.* Secondly, *The manner of enunciation* or declaration of this Propoſition. *The propoſition it ſelf*, that's in theſe words, *All things work together for good to them that love God, &c.* *The manner of enunciation*, that's in this expreſſion of certainty, *We know it.*

We begin with the firſt of theſe parts, *viz. The Propoſition it ſelf, All things work together for good, &c.* Wherein again we have *two branches* more:

Firſt, *The Subject* of the Propoſition, and that is *all things.*

Secondly, *The Predicate*, or that which is declared concerning this Subject; and that is, *That they work together, &c.* Both together do make up to us the great and exceeding Priviledge of the Saints and Servants of God.

For the firſt, *The Subject*, it is *all things*; All things whatſoever they be, they do work together for the good of Gods people. All things
inde-

indefinitely, in omnia. It is a very large and comprehensive word, and so makes for the greater comfort and encouragement of all true Believers. But yet for *orders sake* we may reduce it to a two-fold head: First, To an universality of *subsistence*; All things within the compass of *being*. And secondly, To an universality of *disposition*; All things within the compass of *working*. All things in each of these notions do make for the special good and advantage of the Children of God.

First, *All things* in an universality of subsistence, and within the compass of *being*: There's nothing which can be said to be, but what it is; it is one way or other advantageous to those which are Gods people: Whether we take it in Uncreated Being, which is God himself, or whether we take it, Being created, in those things which are made and fram'd by him: It holds good in both.

First, For God Himself, who is the Being of Beings, the uncreated Being: There's nothing of Him but it makes for the good of his Children. All the Attributes of God, all the Offices of Christ, all the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, they still make for the good of them that belong to Him. Indeed, I do not say that the good of God's Children is the end of those excellencies which are in God; for that were to make Him to be subordinate and reduced to his Creature, which cannot be. No, Gods Being as it is only of Himself, as the spring of it, so it is only for Himself, as the end of it. But I say, that his Childrens good is that which his Being and the goodness of it does in a special manner work and improve it self to as the effect and consequent of it. All the three Persons in the Trinity, they do co-operate in the good of God's Elect. And as they joyn'd together in the making of man at first; *Let us make man, &c.* Gen. 1. 26. So they do likewise joyn together in the making of man again, and the conferring of all good upon him, which should therefore teach man again to do all things for his Glory, and to make him to be the end of his Conversation.

Secondly, For created Being, that's all of it for our good likewise: There is not any of all the Creatures but they are in their several kinds and capacities subservient to the good of the Church, and of every member of it. Angels, they are Spirits ministering for the salvation of the Elect, and they take special charge of them to keep them in all their wayes, as we have it in *Psal. 91. 11.* *Heb. 1. 14.* And men they are for their improvement also, according to their several Abilities, and Offices, and Relations; whether of Government, or of Instruction, or of Protection; or whatsoever else we can name, and that in a variety of persons; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, all yours, as the Apostle tells the Corinthians, *1 Cor. 3. 22.* Nay, they are in league with the very stones of the field, and the beasts of the earth are at peace with them, *Job 5. 23.* And that's the first explication of this, *All things* here mention'd; namely, *All things* in an universality of subsistence, and within the compass of Being.

But secondly, (Which is more close to the Text, and, as I conceive, mainly and principally intended in it,) *All things* in an universality of dispensation, and under the notion of working. All occurrences, and events, and stations, and conditions, whether good, or bad, or indifferent; what ever is done or disposed in the world, it makes for the good of the

Church, which is furthered and advanced by it; but especially are we to take it here in this place of such things as *are evil*, not so much the evil of *sin*, (though even *that* also, as God is pleased to over-rule it, hath *this effect* with it,) or rather the evil of *affliction*. The *worst and crojpest Providences*, the saddest and heaviest Conditions which God's people here in this life are at any time capable of; they are included and intended in this expression. And that's the first thing which is here considerable in this Proposition, to wit, The *Subject* or *Antecedent* of it, *All things*.

The second branch of the Proposition is the *Predicate* or *Consequent* in these words, *Work together for good to them that love God*. Wherein again we have *three* particulars more: First, The *improvement* it self; They *work together*. Secondly, The *end* or *effect* of this improvement; And that is *for good*. Thirdly, The *Persons* who are especially interested in this good, and in the improvement of it: Those that *love God*, and who are the *called according to his purpose*.

For the first, The *improvement* it self, it is this; That they *work together*. The word in the Greek is *συνεργῶ*, which is a Verb compounded, and so is taken asunder, and in pieces by us. Where there are *two things* distinctly and *separately* considerable of us: First, Their *simple operation*. Secondly, Their *additional co-operation*. Their *operation* is this, *That all things work for good to Gods Children*. Their *co-operation* is this, *That all things work together for this good*.

First, I say, here's *their operation*; All things whatsoever they be, they do *work* for the good of *Gods Children*: It is not said, That all things are good, for *that* they are not. Besides many *Sins* and *Temptations*, there are many *Crosses* and *Afflictions* which God's Children are sometimes exercised withall, that in their own nature are *evil*, and so to be *accounted*. But *work* to good, *that* they do; and it may be truly said of them, as it is said of them here, those things which are not good in themselves, yet they may be at least good in their *effects*. And those things which are not good in the *beginning*, yet they may be good in the *conclusion*: They *work* for good, even then when they are *not good*; Take notice of *that*. And there is good which comes out of them, even then where there is not good in them, as immediate unto them: Heb. 12. 11, *No affliction is joyous, but grievous*, &c.

Again, They *work for good*; here's a further note of their *activity*: It had been well if it had been said, They *turn* to good, they are *ordered* and *disposed* to good, and the like. But the *Holy Ghost* does not *content* himself with so narrow an expression as that is, but carries it a little further. If he had said, They *prove* to be good, *that* had been a word of *casualty*, and might have seemed to make it a meer *accident* and matter of *chance*. If he had said, They are *wrought* to good; *that* had been a word of *compulsion*, and might have implied some kind of *inforcement* and constraint hereunto. But now he says rather, They *work* to good, which is an expression of *freeness*, and *forwardness*, and *spontaneity*, and does denote that particular *aptitude*, and *disposition*, and *inclination* which is to be found in every Creature as *subordinate* to the good of the *Church*. There's nothing but it contributes somewhat very readily, and of its own accord, to the comfort, and happiness, and contentment of the

the Children of God, as its proper *work and imployment*, and makes it its *business* to be some way or other *useful* unto them.

And there is very *good reason* for it, if we consider *all*: Forasmuch as the good of the *one* does much depend upon the good of the *other*. It is for the sake of the *Church*, and such as love God, that all things else *do subsist and continue*. Were it not for a *generation of men, of whom the world is not worthy*, who do live and abide in the world; the world it self could not possibly remain, and hold out so as it does at this present day; The very *Axletree* of it would quickly *crack and break* in pieces: The *earth*, and all the *Inhabitants* of it would soon be dissolved, but that these *bear up the Pillars* of it, as it is, *Psal. 75. 3.*

And then not only for their being *now*, but for their being *hereafter*; when they shall be redeemed from the *present vanity and Bondage of Corruption* which is upon them; *this* is likewise dependant upon the good of the *Children of God*. For which reason the Creature is said to *groan and sigh*, and wait for their liberty and glorious appearance, and the manifestation of it, as we formerly heard out of the *19th* verse of this Chapter. Now forasmuch as the *good of the Creature* is dependant upon the good of the *Church*, therefore is the *strength* of the Creature accordingly so much improv'd and drawn out for it. And that's the first thing here considerable of us in this expression, to wit, the Creatures activity and simple operation; All things they *work* for good to God's people.

The second is their additional *Conjunction* and *Co-operation*; They *work together*. By taking the word *συνεργα* in its *composition*, and in the full latitude and extent of it. And here again there are *three* things especially observable of us, as included and involv'd in it: First, Their *efficacy* in working. Secondly, Their *unity* in working. Thirdly, Their *concomitancy* and connexion, and dependance and subordination in working: Each of these are here considerable in this their working *together*.

First, Their *efficacy* in working: Things which *work together*, they work with a great deal of *strength*; and that which is defective in *one*, it is supply'd and made up by the other: *Weak things* when they are *joyned together*, they are enabled to do great matters, *Vix unita fortior*. And so it is here, there must needs be a great deal of good which the Children of God do partake of occasionally from *things of the world*, because all the Creatures do joyn their forces and indeavours, and help to this purpose, and do *contribute* to the accomplishment of it. As they do *groan* together, and *travail in pain* together, as it is said of them in the *22. verse* of this Chapter, so here also they do *work together* likewise. And in that regard are very *effectual and successful*: That's the first thing, their *efficacy* in working.

The second is their *unity* in working: Things that *work together*, they work with a great deal of *cheerfulness* and alacrity, and agreement in their performance. *Co-operation* it implies *Conspiration*. Those that *work together*, they impart their abilities *freely*, without envy and grudging, and repining at *one anothers* success: *Can two walk together, sayes the Prophet, and not be agreed*; and can two *work together*, may we say also, and not be agreed likewise. Why, thus it is here now in

this business whereof we speak. The Lord hath made every Creature to be willing to do what it can, and to lend its *helping-hand* for the good of the Church; at least to unite in the end, where it does not always in the means.

The third is their *concomitancy and connexion*, and subordination in working. And this again it may be taken three manner of ways. There is a three-fold *co-operation or working together* of all things for the good of God's Children, which is here pertinently considerable of us: First, They work together with God. Secondly, They work together with us. Thirdly, They work together one with another.

First, When it is said here in this Scripture, *That all things work together for good to them that love God*: We must take it with this explication, *That they work together with God Himself*. They are not able to work thus of themselves, unless he be pleas'd accordingly to improve them, and to draw them forth; It is God that turns all things to the good of those that are his: God does co-operate all things for good, &c. Thus the Apostle speaking of Himself, and the rest of the Ministers, says, *That they are workers together with God*, *συνεργοὶ θεοῦ*, 2 Cor. 6. 1. Ministers, they are in their place useful and beneficial to the Church; yea, but it is God Himself that must work with them, or else they work in vain. And so it is with every thing else besides in the whole course of mans life; man lives not by bread, &c. It is God that must work with every Creature, and with every Providence to make it profitable to us, or else it will never have such an influence as this upon us. And this is that which he does for the making good of this Point unto us, as we may see by those admirable things which are done by him. When we shall see Light rising out of Darknes, Health out of Sicknes, Riches out of Poverty, Honour out of Disgrace, Good out of Evil, and one contrary out of another; How could this ever be effected, if God Himself did not concur in it? who is therefore to be acknowledged in all the good which we receive from all particulars; *They work together with him*.

Secondly, *They work together*, that is, *they work together with us*. Although there be (as I have already shewen) a readiness and inclination in every Creature to do good to the Children of God; yet this is not so to be taken as excluding our endeavour: No, but we our selves must be active and concurring hereunto. We should labour and endeavour to get good out of every Providence, and whatsoever happens unto us: And the more gracious and spiritual we are, the more we shall do. It is not only what the meat is, but what the stomach for the digesting of it. And so it is not only what the Providence is, but what the spirit for the improving of it; whether Prosperity or Adversity.

This is done especially according to these following Observations:

First, By labouring for a clear and upright Conscience. The way for all things to be good for us, is for us first to be good our selves: To the pure, all things are pure; and because pure, therefore good, Tit. 1. 15. *Quicquid recipitur, recipitur ad modum recipientes*. A corrupt stomach spoils the best meat that is put into it, and a corrupt heart abuses the best blessings that are bestowed upon it.

Secondly,

Secondly, By prayer and calling upon God: *Every Creature of God is good, being sanctified by the word of God and prayer, 1 Tim. 4. 4. You also helping together by prayer for us, 2 Cor. 1. 11.* Therefore here in the Text it is mention'd after the manner of prayer: *And this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, Phil. 1. 19.* There is a special vertue and efficacy in prayer, to make *all things* whatsoever they be, to be advantageous to us.

Thirdly, By studying the Providence of God, and observing him in all his dealings with us; we should take notice of *the things themselves*, and take notice of our *own hearts* in them, how far forth they are affected with them, that so we may receive good and benefit from them.

Especially, look up to Christ, and act Faith in all those promises which God has made to such and such conditions: This will suck and draw vertue out of them, and make an happy improvement of them; And all things work together for us, so they work together with us. And that's the second co-operation.

Thirdly, *They work together*; that is, they work together one with another: If we take any passage of Providence singly, and alone by it self, perhaps we may not so easily see how it does indeed work for our good. But take it now in its complication and connexion with many more, and then we shall see it abundantly: *Et quæ non profat singula juncta juvant.* Look as it is in matter of Physick, take the simples alone by themselves, and they may poison rather then cure; but take them in their composition, and as they are made up by the Art of the Physician who hath skill in them, and knows how to dispose them, and so they prove to be an excellent Medicine, and a means of restoring of health. Even so it is also with any providence of God towards us, if we take it alone by it self it may be thought to be somewhat pernicious, but in its Conjunction it is very comfortable and advantageous. Compare time with time, circumstance with circumstance, and this passage of our life at present with some other that hath gone before it, or may follow after it. And so we shall see all things sooner or later, working for our good; They work together, that is, they work together one with another. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the first thing observable in this passage, viz. The improvement it self.

The second is the effect or end of this improvement, and that is here exprest to be for good, *in æquis.* Here is no good set down, so as to declare what it is, only indefinitely and in the general, that it is for good; which teaches us thus much, that it is for any good: And which teaches us thus much, that it is for all good; for Temporal, and for Spiritual, and for Eternal: It works for each.

First, For temporal good; God sometimes does his Servants good in this, by those things which at the first appearance seem opposite and contrary hereunto. As Joseph, when his Brethren sold him into Egypt, it was for his advantage even in a way of the world, even as himself declares unto them, Gen. 50. 20. *You thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good.* And to good to him for his particular, as we may see in the several passages of that story. God sometimes in his Providence denies his Servants such and such comforts, and takes occasion from his very denial of them, to bestow better and greater upon them.

Secondly,

Secondly, For *spiritual* good, so all things work for good to them *how ever*. Every passage of Providence to those who are the *Children of God*, it serves to draw them nearer to God, and to perfect their communion with Him; and accordingly are they careful for this particular so to improve it. This is the property of *Grace*, that it will never loose by any Providence, but be still on the winning side, as bettering it self in a way of Religion occasionally from it. Look as on the other side, worldlings they endeavour from things of Religion, to advance themselves in a way of the world: Even so here do the Children of God endeavour from the things of the world, to advance themselves in a way of Religion.

Thirdly, For *eternal* good, which is the main good of all. This is that which God has *chiefest* respect unto in all his dealings and carriages towards his people; what-ever he does to them otherwise, he has still an eye and regard to this, which he will not cross or contradict in them, or to them. All things shall be sure thus far to make for the good of God's Children, so as at last to bring them to Heaven, and eternal Salvation, which is his great design upon them. This is still to be laid for a ground, and taken for granted; that if we be such as belong to God, all things shall work for our good one way or other: If not for our *Corporal* good, yet at least for our *Spiritual*; And if not for our *Temporal* good, yet at least for our *Eternal*: We may be sure that they shall work for our good, although the particular good may for the present be undiscern'd by us. That's the second thing here considerable, to wit, the end or effect of this improvement, and that is Good.

The third and last is the persons, who are more especially interest'd in it, and they are the Children of God; who are here described from a double qualification, The one of their Christian affection, To them that love God; And the other of their effectual vocation, To them which are the called according to his purpose. I shall not now at this time insist upon them in their particular emphasis, but only look upon them in their general notion, as a description of Gods people, but yet with an emphasis also of Restriction and appropriation. And so there is this in it, That Gods Children, and they alone, have all things working to them for their good: There's none that have interest in the privilege, but those only that do partake of the condition. Those that love God, that is, that are sanctified with true and saving Grace. And those that are the called according to his purpose, that is, that are regenerated and born again, those are the persons who have such an happiness as this is belonging unto them. As for other people, they are so far from having all things to work for their good, as that they rather work the quite contrary, for their greatest evil. God Himself being an Enemy to them, every thing else is an enemy with him, and all the Creatures are ready to rise up in arms against them: The Word of God is a favour of death to them, the Sacraments they are occasions of Judgment. Prayer it becomes an abomination, there's a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block in all their Comforts. Every thing is the worse for them, and they for it; God curses their very Blessings. And so now I have done with, the first general Part of the Text, which is the Proposition it self, in these words, All things work together for good to them that love God, &c.

The

The Second is the *Manner of Enunciation*, or declaration of this Proposition in these words, *We know it*, which is an Expression of great Confirmation; It is not a matter of *guess* only, or *conjecture*, but of *certainty and assurance*. Gods Children, as they have this Priviledge *assuredly belonging* unto them for the certainty of the *Object*; so they are *assured likewise* of their *own Interest* in it, for the certainty of the *Subject*: Thus Eccl. 8. 12, *Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his dayes be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, that fear before him; But it shall not be well with the wicked, because he feareth not before God.* Mark here, *surely I know*: This knowledge of a Believer, it may be reduced to a threefold head of conveyance; First, we know it by *Revelation*. Secondly, we know it by *Reason*: and Thirdly, we know it by *Experience*.

First, By *Revelation*; we know it as a *Truth*, which God himself has made known unto us, and acquainted us withall. As for the Apostle *Paul*, he knew it by *immediate inspiration*, as he did many other points besides, which from God he propounds in his *Epistles*: But we know it by discovery from *Him*, and other Penmen of Holy Scripture with him, who have with *him* declared as much as this unto us; it is the Doctrine of the whole Bible in every page. Thus *Esay* 3. 10, *Say ye to the Righteous, it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit, &c. Say ye it to him; that is, say it boldly and confidently, as nothing to be doubted of.* So *Psal.* 128. 1, 2, *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord: Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.* It is a Truth which is revealed and made known to us out of the Scripture it self.

And then it is revealed to us also in our Consciences, by the Spirit of God fastning it there, as every truth of *Religion* besides; It is not only written in the Bible, but also in the Heart of a Christian; which is a kind of Copy and Transcript of it. The holy *anointing*, whereby we know all things, that teaches it amongst the rest, *1 Joh.* 2. 27. *And God hath revealed these things to us by his spirit*, as the Apostle speaks, *1 Cor.* 2. 10. Every true Christian and Believer has such an Impression upon him of Gods love and favour towards him, in that *Communion* which he does enjoy with him as does evidence thus much unto him.

Secondly, As we know it by *Revelation*, so we know it also by *Reason* and the Deduction of one thing from another; we know it *Discursively*. When we say by *Reason*, we do not mean carnal Reason, which is opposite and contrary to it; nor we do not mean neither meer humane Reason in the best natural constitution of it which is much to seek in the things of God, and amongst the rest *comes short* of such a truth as *this is*. But by *Reason*, we mean Reason *sanctified*, and renewed, and elevated by *Grace*; For *Grace* it does not destroy Reason, but rather adds to it, and improves it. And so it does here in this Point, which we are now upon; there is very great Reason for it.

First, That which we have here in the Text, the *Eternal purpose* of God himself, whatsoever is done in the world, it is subservient to Gods Decree, and tends to the fulfilling of that. Now this is that which God hath purposed, and ordain'd, and appointed *aforehand*, even to bring his Children to perfect happiness and salvation at last. And therefore

therefore must *all* things be subordinate and conducing thereto; for who hath resisted *his will*?

Secondly, Gods *Affection*, and the *Love* which he bears to Believers, *this makes* for it also. *If you which are Evil* (saith our Saviour) *know how to give good gifts to your Children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him?* Matth. 7. 11. Take any *Earthly Parent*, and if he knew any thing *better* than other for his Child he would bestow it *upon him*, and how much *more* then will God do so *with his Children*.

Especially, if we shall further add his *Omnipotence* and *Almighty Power*; that he does whatsoever he pleases both *in Heaven and Earth*; that all things are at *his disposing*, and ordered and regulated by him; this will put it out of all question, and make us fully perswaded of it. As for *Earthly Parents*, they may sometimes wish better to their Children than they can *do for them*; and the greatest Affection there has not alwayes the greatest opportunity or ability for the Expression of it; but now in God there's *both* together. *Affection* and *Power*.

Thirdly, *The Covenant of Grace*; That does likewise make much for this purpose, for there God engages himself to us, that *He will be our God*; which is a very large and comprehensive Expression, and does necessarily include this in it, *That all things shall work for our good*; and that nothing which is good for us, shall be kept or withheld from us. Hence it is that we are in covenant with the *Creatures*; because we are first in covenant with the Creator.

Fourthly, *The Mystical Union* which is betwixt Christ, and every true Believer; a Believer is made one with *Christ*, & so receives Influence from him, through his *whole life*; and Christ takes away the *hurt* of all evil from him, and likewise puts a sweetness into all the good which happens to him. He makes Afflictions *profitable*, and Comforts *comfortable*. And that's now the second way, whereby we know this Point to be a Truth; namely by *Reason* and *Discourse*.

Thirdly and Lastly, by *Experience*; we know that all things work for our good, by the event and effects of all things, both upon our *selves* and *other men*. Take my Brethren the Prophets as a proof and instance of this point, as St. James speaks, *Ask all the Servants of God* which have ever been in the world, from the very *first Creation* to this *present*, whether they have not been under some *Temptation*, and special distemper, and see if they will not unanimously bear witness to this present Truth: And that sometimes when they have been *dying* and going out of the world. Oh! sayes such an one, I would not have been without this *Sickness* for any *good*; sayes another, I would not but have had this *loss* for all the world; sayes a third of some other Affliction, Well, it is the happiest Providence that ever befell me: Thus have they been ready upon all occasions both *to justifie God*, and likewise to applaud themselves even in their worst conditions, upon that *proof* of them, which they have sometimes found in their own *Experience*. And that's the *third* Discovery of this Truth to us, whereby we come to *know it*.

Now this Expression of certainty; *we know* it is further considerable of us (as it lyes here in the Text) not only in the *sense* of it, and that which

which is *included in it*; but also in the *scope* of it, and that which is *intended by it*. And that according to a *threefold Reflexion*; First, It is a word of *Confidence* and *settlement* in reference to *our selves*. Secondly, It is a word of *Comfort* and *Incouragement* in reference to *our Brethren*. Thirdly, It is a word of *Conviction* and *Confusion* in reference to *our Enemies*, and those that *rejoyce in our Distresses*.

First, I say, it is a word of *confidence and settlement* in reference to *our selves*. The Apostle Paul by reflecting upon this Truth, does endeavour so much the more to settle and confirm himself in the ways of Religion; and teaches us likewise accordingly to do so from *his Example*. To provoke our *Actual knowledge* from our *Habitual*, and from what we *know in the general*, and seem to take for granted for the *main*. To *know*, that is at present to *imbrace* upon this occasion, and the particular state and condition in which we are at this present time.

Secondly, It is a word of *Comfort and Incouragement* in reference to *our Brethren*. The Apostle whiles he says here *We know*, he does not only hereby express his *own Faith* and apprehension of this Truth; but likewise does occasionally from it endeavour to *strengthen the Romans*, and to comfort them in their *Afflictions*; *We know* it, which are *your Ministers and Teachers*, and we would have you to know it also, and to believe it, and to be persuaded of it from *our Discovery*.

Thirdly, It is a word of *Conviction* and *confusion* in reference to *our Enemies*. Those who are *Enemies of Gods People*, they are apt sometimes to insult *over them*, and to triumph in the calamities that befall them, as thinking that now they have gotten the *better* of them, as we may see in *Lam. 2. 16*, *All thine Enemies have open'd their mouth against thee: They say, we have swallow'd her up, &c.* Well, but the People of God, they make this return again *with a contrary triumph*, and insultation over the Enemy; *We know* that all these things shall work for the best unto us, *Micah 7. 8. 10.* And thus we have seen this *great privilege* of Believers laid open, and illustrated to us.

And now for the *Improvement* and Application of all this to *our selves*; First, here's ground of *patience* and contentation in every Condition. The cause of *all grief* and *sadness* is the Apprehension of *some evil and misery* which is upon us. Now here's that which may serve to *qualifie it*, when we shall consider whatever befalls us, that it *still works for our good* we should all be so far persuaded of Gods Love and Affection to us, of his Care and Providence over us, of his Wisdom and Activity for us, as to think that condition to be the best, which he is pleased at such a time to *order*, and to dispose unto us, and whiles we come once to do so, we shall from hence be sure to rest *satisfied* and contented in it. And we should bring down this *general proposition* to our *particular Condition*; that so from thence we may have the *full Comfort* and benefit of it: If all things work to the good of Gods Children, why then to *my self* amongst the rest, who I hope (through his Grace) am one of *that number*; and if all things work for my good; why then this present condition in which I am amongst the rest, *whatever it be*. This *Sickness*, this *poverty*, this *restraint*, this *loss*; loss of Goods, loss of Liberty, loss of Friends, loss of Children: loss, yea it may be *miscarriage* of such and such *neer Relations*. Be it (I say) whatever it may be, even the worst

condition that *can* be ; yet I know that it is still for my good , because *all things else* are *so unto* me , and the *particular* is included in the *general* thus , we should with an holy kind of *violence* force our selves (as I may say) upon the belief of such things as these are , and so draw out the *sweetness* of them , bring it to this Head and Disjunction : Either we are such as are *Gods Children* , or we are not : If we be not his Children , why then we have somewhat else to look to besides our condition here in the world ; If we be his Children , then we may rest satisfied in our condition whatever it be , upon this account that we are his Children . We read amongst the *Jewish Rabbins* of one that was call'd *Gamzo* ; because whatever happen'd unto him , he would have still this saying in his mouth , *Gam zo le-tovi* ; that is , *This also is for my good* ; and the same should also be said , and thought by every *Christian* .

And let us know , that the more that we do indeed *think so* , the more we shall have *cause* to think so , and be able to *do so* , and have this Truth made good to our selves upon *our own Experience* . When we altogether dwell upon our present Trouble whatsoever it be , and lye down under the burden of it , and refuse to be comforted , we do thereby but so much the more intangle our selves with it , and besides oftentimes provoke God to give us up to the discontentedness of our own spirits , and to deny us , and to withhold from us the comforts and consolations of his Spirit , and of those promises which he has made unto us in such conditions ; but when we quietly submit unto him in the belief of what he offers to us , he does in such cases so much the more satisfactorily reflect upon us when we give God the Truth of his promises . He will give us the comfort of them , and when we honour him by believing , he will succour us by supporting & sustaining of us in such and such conditions . If ye believe , surely ye shall be established , as the Prophet seems there to imply , *Esay 7. 9.*

Again , As this makes for patience in the present condition ; so also for hope for time to come . As for patience , so for patient expectation : Here's that which may prevent all solicitous and distracting fears ; there are some persons who are sometimes more troubled with the fear of Evil , then with the sense of it ; what shall become of them hereafter , and what may befall them in following times . Now here's that which does satisfy in this also , when they shall consider what it shall befit shall still be for the best .

Again further , we may carry on this Truth not only to the comfort of such and such Christians in particular ; but also of the whole Church in general , by taking the words in the Text ; not Distributively only , but Collectively . There is a various Dispensation of Providence to the Church of God whiles it is here in the world ; sometimes in a more prosperous condition , and sometimes in a more afflicted ; but whatever its condition be , God does still order it , and over-rule it for the best unto it ; we read in *Cant. 4. 16.* How *Christ* calls both for the North-wind , and for the South-wind , to blow upon his Garden , that is , upon his Church . The North-wind , and the South-wind , they are windes out of two contrary corners , and they are windes of two contrary qualities and properties , which are remarkable in them : The North-wind that's a bleak and sharp one ; the South that's a mild and warm one , and more favourable ; but yet both of them for the good of *Christ's Garden* , where he will have them

them to blow upon it; we use to say, *That it is an ill wind, that blows no body good.* But every wind it is sure to blow good to the Church, and to every member of it, and accordingly we may depend upon it. And thus may this point be improved by us in a way of patience, and comfort, and consolation.

But secondly, It may serve further to rectifie us, and to set us right in our Judgments and Opinions; and that especially in three particulars, First, of God himself; Secondly, of the Children of God; Thirdly, of Religion and Christianity. First, It may teach us to have good conceits of God himself, and to think rightly and soberly of him, we are apt now and then to do otherwise, through that weakness and infirmity which is in us, set on further by Satan, even to have harsh and hard apprehensions of the Providence of God, and to think he deals too severely with us; yea, but we should take heed of thinking so from this passage which we have now before us; whiles God has good thoughts for us, we should have good thoughts of him, and justifie him in his Proceedings in the world, say as they did of Christ, He hath done all things well; for so he has done, and does so, and will do, whether we think so or no; and will at length discover as much unto us.

There are certain intricacies and perplexities in Providence, which are not presently discern'd or apprehended; there are the wheels moving within the wheels, as it is in Ezekiel, and we must be content to stay Gods leisure for the opening and unfolding of them to us, *What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter*; as our Saviour sometimes spake to Peter, upon a particular occasion, and therefore we should stay till hereafter, before we pass our censure upon that which is done by him; when ever we refuse to do so, we do thereby wrong both him and our selves; and so at length shall find it so to our greater astonishment and confusion. Beloved, God will one day experimentally confute and shame his People for all their unkind unbelief, and mistrustfulness of him, by proving better to them in conclusion than themselves expected. He will convince them, and assure them of the Equality of his ways towards them; and that whatever has been done to them, it has been best for them, and so well, as that nothing could have been better. And therefore let us from hence learn to think well of what ever he does, to have good thoughts of God himself.

Secondly, To have good thoughts also of the Children of God, and to think rightly of them; here's that which may make us in love with the state of Gods people, and to set an high price upon them: *Happy art thou O Israel, who is like unto thee O people saved by the Lord.* Deut. 33. 29. The Children of God, they have not, for the most part, many things here in this world, their portion does not lye in these matters; but what they have, they have it for their good, be it more or less; & what-ever they have not, it is for their good also, not to have it: Here's the difference betwixt a true Christian and a worldly person; take a worldling, and he can perhaps say sometimes, *I know I have all things, Riches, and Honours, and Pleasures, and Friends, and strength, and the like*; Oh! but he cannot say, *I know I have all these things working to my good.* This is the Priviledge of the people of God, which makes them to be a blessed Generation upon that account, and so we should learn to esteem of them; do not judge of men by what they have, but how they have it.

Thirdly, It should make us to think well of *Religion* and *Christianity* *it self*, which does carry so much *comfort* and *consolation* in the bowels of it, and more than any *other mysterie* or *Profession* whatsoever besides; there's no *such sweetness* to be found any where, as in the principles of *Christianity improved* and liv'd up to in the *power of them*. This one single *passage alone* which we have here before us in this *present Scripture*; its worth *an whole Kingdom*; yea, it is more worth *than all the world*, and accordingly should be improved *by us*, to support and stay our selves from it in all *Conditions*. I say, It should be improved *by us*, and desire God by his Spirit to set them home upon our hearts; for it is not those truths only as *they lye in the Bible*, and are only offer'd to us in the *Ministry of the Word*, which are so effectual to us for the comforting of *us*; but as they are received and imbraced by *our hearts*, and digested by our most frequent Meditations. Oh what sweet lives might Christians have if they lived more upon Christian Truths.

And that finally we may be sure to have the first improvement of it *indeed*, let us remember to labour to be so *qualified in our selves*, as from whence we may become capable of it. This is a sweet Truth, and all are ready to *catch at it*; but we must see that we have a share in it, by being such as do *indeed belong to God*, and are his Servants; for this it *is the Childrens bread*, and therefore it is not to be *cast to Dogs*, but to those who are indeed Children, such as *love God*, and are call'd according to his purpose, as it is express'd here in the Text. Our business is not so much with our *Conditions*, as it is with our *Persons*; If we be right *our selves*, every thing else will be right *with us*, and right *to us*; whereas if we be not so, all things will work and move *against us*; therefore let us begin at the *right end*, and there where we should do; that so whatsoever we *do*, and whatsoever we *have*, may prosper, and we prosper in the *having of it*. And let us *blefs God* for affording *us such comfortable instructions* as these are *to us*. There are *two particulars*, which we have great cause to blefs God for. First, that he is pleased so *to order it*; that all things shall indeed work to our good, in reference to our *Condition*; and then that he is pleased to *manifest and reveal such a Truth* as this is to us, in reference to our satisfaction.

S E R M O N.



S E R M O N XXXII.

R O M. 8. 28.

To them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

It is a great part of skill and faithfulness in those who are Ministers of the Gospel, and Stewards of the Mysteries of Christ, as the Apostle Paul calls them, to distribute to all kind of persons that portion which is fittest for them, and does most properly appertain unto them: And more especially in point of Comfort, and Inconouragement, and Consolation; Not to give holy things to Dogs, nor to cast Pearls before Swine, as our Saviour expresses it; that is, not to apply special Priviledges to such people as have no share at all, or interest in them; but rather to fasten them there, where of right they do belong. And this is that which we may observe to be here practised by the Apostle himself in this Scripture which we have still before us; where treating of an incomparable Priviledge as any else again in the World, Of all things working together for good; he is careful to appropriate it to such persons as are concerned in it, and who are indeed partakers of it.

THe persons concern'd in this blessed Priviledge of the improvement of all things to their good, are such as are the *Children of God*, and they alone, whom we have already looked upon in the general notion and consideration of them, and as taken in the gross. It remains for the handling of this Text so as we should do, and the giving of it its due right, that we should look upon it a little more in the particular, and according to that peculiar description which is here made of *Gods Children*, which is here (as it lies before us) two-fold.

First, From their *Christian affection*; and that is of those that love God.

Secondly, Of their *effectual vocation*; and that is of those that are the called according to his purpose.

We begin with the first of these Branches, viz. Of that description which is here made of the *Children of God*, as taken from their *Christian affection*, of those that love God. This is a special property and character of the *Servants of God*, whereby they are known and distinguished from all other persons besides, and so frequently represented to us in the Book
of

of God; we have divers instances of it, take some one or two amongst the rest. Thus 1 Cor. 2. 9. *The things which God hath prepared for them that love him. For them that love him, that is, for his Children.* So James 1. 12. *The Crown of life which God hath promised to them that love him.* And again, James 2. 5. *The Kingdom which God hath promised to them that love him, &c.* In these, and many like places, are Gods Children described by this Character, of their special love and affection to God.

The reason of it is this:

First, Because this is the most excellent qualification of all others: It is that which the Scripture prefers above all other Graces; though they all have their dignity in them, yet love it goes beyond them all, being such as shall last and continue, whiles the other cease in regard of the exercise and authority of them. Thus 1 Cor. 13. 13. *Now abideth Faith, Hope, and Love; but the greatest of these is Love, indeed in some respects.* So Faith is made to have the prebeminence, namely, as concerning the business of Justification. There is no Grace which is accommodated to lay hold upon the Righteousness of Christ, whereby we are justified, but that only. And so therefore upon this account are Gods Children oftentimes described by the name of Believers. But if we consider it in some other respects, so love has the place before it, or any other whatsoever.

Secondly, It is an affection of the greatest influence and extent: It is that which, where-ever it is, sets the wheels of the Soul a going for the doing of other things. He that loves God, he will stick at nothing else which God commands or requires at his hands. He will do for God, he will suffer for him, and his Commandments will not be grievous to him, 1 John 5. 3. Yea, and he will do every thing likewise in that manner, after which it is to be done by him. What's the reason that many perform Duties in a careless and negligent manner, they care not how? It is for want of love both to the things themselves, and to him that employs them, and sets them on work; whereas this love it makes men earnest, and zealous, and fervent in that which is undertaken by them. This it is such an over-ruling affection, as that the whole Law of God is reduced unto it. Love, it is the fulfilling of the Law, Rom. 13. 10. And the end of the Commandment is love, 1 Tim. 1. 5. Yea, and our Saviour makes this the first and greatest Commandment, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, &c.* Mark 12. 30.

Thirdly, It is that also whereby we most resemble God Himself, and become likest to Him. This the Apostle John signifies in 1 John 4. 16. *We have known, and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.* There's no better description of Children, then by that wherein they are likest their Father. And thus are the Children of God likest to Him; They are herein the Children of their Father which is in Heaven, Matth. 5. 45.

Lastly, It is that which is most proper to all those Relations wherein the faithful stand unto God; as the Friends of Christ, as the Members of Christ, as the Spouse of Christ. There is nothing which is more proper to any persons which are in such Conditions and Relations, then this

this affection of *love*, and so the *fittest character* and description of them.

For the better opening of this Point, it may not be amiss for us to consider wherein this our love of God does consist, and what is the *nature and working* of it. Now for this it does especially consist in these three Particulars: First, In our estimation of him. Secondly, In our desires after him. Thirdly, In our delight in him.

First, In our estimation of him, an high *prizing and valuing* of those Excellencies and Perfections which are in him. Those that *love any person*, they do much incline to a good opinion and account of him: And so it is here in our *love of God*, according to which we may very much judge of the truth and reality of it; as we may see it was with the *Spouse of Christ*, Cant. 5. 9. where bearing a special affection to him, she breaks forth into a very large and high commendation of him.

And this prizing and esteeming of him, it does shew it self farther in such effects as flow from it:

First, In *parting with any thing for him*: Love, it is a self denying affection, and thinks nothing too good for the person whom it is fasten'd upon: As we may see in the carriage of *Schechem to Dinah*, Ask me never so much, and I will give it thee, Gen. 34. 12, 19. And in the carriage of *Jonathan to David*, Whatsoever thy Soul desireth I will even do it for thee, 1 Sam. 20. 4. So is it also in the *love of God*, it makes us so far forth willing to part with all things for his sake.

Secondly, In *zeal for him*, and maintaining and defending of him upon all occasions. Love, it is a vindicative affection, and is ready upon all occasions to take the part of the party beloved: It is sensible of all the wrongs and injuries which are offer'd to him, as done to it self. Thus *David*, Psal. 119. 136. Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because men keep not thy Law. And verse 139. My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy word. And verse 158. I beheld the transgressors and was grieved, because they kept not thy word.

Thirdly, This prizing of God, as a testimony of our love to him, will shew it self in a proportionable estimation both of our selves, and of every one else in reference to him; when we value either things or persons so much the more as they have any thing of God in them. And thus does our love of God consist in an high account and estimation of him.

Secondly, In a special longing and desire of soul after him: Love, it is a desire of Union. And so it is here, where we love God, we shall very much thirst after communion with him: Tell me O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, &c. Cant. 1. 7. And as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God, Psal. 42. 1. O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee, &c. Psal. 63. 1. And one thing have I desired, Psal. 27. 4.

Thirdly, In special delight, and complacency, and contentment in him; where there's love, this is a great deal of satisfaction from the company and fellowship, and society one of another. And so here, Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on Earth which I delight in, in comparison of thee, Psal. 73. 25.

The Use of this Point to our selves comes to this purpose :

First, As a discovery *to our selves*, what we are *for our particular* : It is that which every one will pretend *to*, that they are such as *do love God*, and will be ready to say, that it is pity that he should live that does not *do so* : But now, it is very considerable whether we *do indeed* do so, or no.

For which purpose, let us examine what authority his Commands have with us ; either for restraining us for that which is evil, or for the enforcing of us to that which is good. How *active* we are at any time *for God*, and fruitful in those places wherein he *has set us* ; *Peter loveth thou me, feed my sheep*, sayes Christ : And so it holds for any thing else, wherein we may be *serviceable* to Christ. The love of Christ will here *constrains* us, as St. Paul speaks, 2 Cor. 5. 14. Love it is active and obsequious, and so also it makes us to love those who are the *Children of God* for his sake. Thus it serves first of all for discovery.

Secondly, Here's matter of *comfort* to all those who are the *Children of God*. It is a very great encouragement to them, that they are known by *this description*, as that which will bear them up in time of *Temptation*, wherein, when they can see *nothing else* in themselves as a *ground of satisfaction* to them, yet they can at least *see this*. Their hearts cannot but say, that *they love God*, though they are, it may be, conscious to themselves of many weaknesses *together with it* : Yea, when *Satan* does endeavour to perswade them that God does not *love them*, yet for all this they can stand to it, that they do *love Him*. And so being assured of their love to God, they may *consequently conclude* his love to them ; *Who love him, because he first loved them*, as it is, 1 John 4. 19. *Our love of God*, it is but a *reflection* of his love to us.

Thirdly, Seeing God's Children are thus described from their loving of God ; we see what cause we all of us have to make *good this Character in our selves*, and to be provoked to this heavenly affection. There are divers *Arguments* which make *for it*, and there are divers *Directions* which lead to it.

First, As to Arguments for it, take notice of these : First, *Goodness*, that's *one incentive* to love ; it is the ground of all that love which we bear to the Creature, because we apprehend some special good and excellency in it. Now this is considerable in *God* after a more excellent manner ; what-ever good there is in *any Creature*, it is all derived from *Him* : He is the *Ocean* to all the *Rivers* of Goodness : And He is the *Sun* to all the *Beams* of Goodness, &c.

Secondly, *Beauty*, that's another thing in the *Object of Love* ; not only that it be *Bonum*, but *Pulchrum* : It must have some kind of *attractiveness* and inticing with it ; now this is also in God. It is said of *Christ*, *That he is the fairest of ten thousand*, Cant. 5. 10. And that *he is fairer than all the Children of men*, Psal. 45. 2. We read of the *beauty of the Lord*, Psal. 27. 4. And the *beauties of holiness*, in Psal. 110. 3.

Thirdly, *Propinquity and nearness of Relation*, that also calls for love : It is so betwixt man and man, or at least *should be so*. And so likewise here, He is our Father, our Husband, our Head, our Lord and Master, and *what not*. Therefore we should *love Him*.

Lastly,

Lastly, His love to us; Love, it begets love again. And so it should be here, by way of thankfulness, and grateful return: *I will love the Lord*, sayes David, *because he hath heard me*, Psal. 116. 1. And again, Psal. 18. 1, 2, *I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my Rock*, &c. We should consider what God hath done for us, as a great ingagement of our love to him: In his Works of Creation, Providence, Redemption, and especially this last. This for the Arguments.

Now further; for the Directions and Helps to it, take notice of these:

First, To beg it of God; there's none that can love God truly, but such persons as he enables to do so. As he inclines mens affections to one another, so also to Himself, and has here the sole command of them. And therefore desire him to shew his goodness and loveliness to us, as Moses, *Shew me thy Glory*, and accordingly to draw our hearts and affections to a closing with it.

Secondly, Get our hearts weaned from a loving and admiring of the World: Lust, it is an hinderance of love; and adulterous Affection, of Conjugal. Those Toke-fellows can never love one another so as they should do, who have their love set upon strangers. Now those Christians can never love God so as they should do, who have their love set upon the World: Whosoever will be a friend of the World, is an Enemy of God, sayes the Apostle James, Chap. 4. ver. 4. And if any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him, sayes the Apostle John, 1 John 2. 15.

Thirdly, Labour to be like God, and to have his Image stamp upon us: Love, it is founded in likeness; there is somewhat futable which draws the affection. And so it is here, when we are once made partakers of his holiness, we shall then take special delight in him; as being thereby made conformable to him, which is very effectual to this purpose.

All these things laid together, may serve to inforce this Point upon us; and for a close and conclusion of all, let us consider thus much, That all we do is nothing without this, nor all we have: Though we had the Tongues of men and of Angels: Though we should give our Bodies to be burnt, and had not this, it would profit us nothing, as it is in 1 Cor. 13. 1. The greatest and highest Gifts and Abilities, the noblest and highest Acts and Performances, if we take them separated from our love to God, they are of no advantage. And so now I have done with the first branch of the Description of God's Children, and of such persons as have an interest in the Priviledge above mention'd, of all things working to their good, as taken from their Christian affection, in these words, *To them that love God*.

The second is from their effectual vocation, in these words, *To them that are called according to his purpose*. Wherein again, we have two Branches more: First, The condition it self; And that is, of such as are called. Secondly, The ground of this Condition, as also of the Priviledge above mention'd, and that is the purpose, and good pleasure, and decree of God Himself.

We begin with the first, Their Condition, such as are called: Those who are Gods Children, and whom he honors with the glorious Priviledge and Prerogative belonging to his Children, they are such persons as are

O o o

effectually

effectually called; take notice of *that*. For the better opening and unfolding of this present Point unto us, there are divers things which are here pertinently considerable of us: First, What this calling it self is, for the nature of it. Secondly, Who it is that does call, for the Authority of it. Thirdly, *The manner or means*, and time of calling, for the carriage of it. Fourthly, *The persons themselves who are called*, for the Subjects of it.

First, For the *calling it self*, to shew you what it is. Now this it may be briefly thus described and declared unto us: *Calling*, it is a work of God's Spirit, whereby, in the use of the means, he does effectually draw the Elect from Ignorance and Unbelief, to true Knowledge and Faith in Christ: This is the *Calling* which is here spoken of. There's a double *Calling* which is mention'd in Scripture; The one is common and general in the publishing and preaching of the Gospel, which all that live in the bosome of the Church, and under the means of Grace, are partakers of. The other is special and peculiar, which belongs only to the Elect, and to such persons as God has predestinated and ordained to eternal life. And this latter is that which we have here in this Text, which are called according to his purpose.

Now this *Call*, for the better conceiving and understanding of it, may be illustrated and set forth unto us according to a double amplification: First, Of the parts whereof it consists. Secondly, Of the terms from whence and to which it proceeds.

First, As to the former, the parts whereof this special and peculiar *Calling* does consist, they are again two-fold: First, *God's Invitation*. And secondly, *Man's Acceptation*. God's *Call*, and our Answer to this his *Call*, in the imbracing and entertaining of it.

First, There's *God's invitation*; The Lord does of his free Grace and Bounty invite poor Sinners to himself. Thus Matth. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will refresh you*. So Esay 55. 1, *Ho every one that thirsteth, come unto the waters, come, &c.* And so Prov. 9. 5. Wisdom makes her Cry and Proclamation, *Come eat of my bread, &c.*

But secondly, To make it compleat; there's mans actual *acceptation* of Christ thus offer'd and tender'd to him: John 1. 11, 12, *He came to his own, and his own received him not: But as many as received him, to them he gave power to be the Sons of God, &c.* Where, together with Christ's presentment, there's our entertainment. Effectual calling is such a revealing of God's Grace to our hearts, as makes us actually to come forth of our selves, and accept of life from him through Christ.

The second thing considerable in this *Calling* is (as the parts whereof it consists, so) the terms from which and to which it does proceed. And these according to the language of Scripture, are *Sin*, and *Grace*, from that miserable and wretched condition in which all men are by Nature, to the happy estate and condition of the Children of God. Thus the Scripture sets it in sundry places, as Act. 26. 18. Where Paul speaking of the scope of the Ministry, and declaring what it is, sayes, *It is to open mens eyes, to turn them from Darknes to Light, and from the Power of Satan to God*. And Ephes. 5. 8. *Ye were sometimes darknes, but now light in the Lord*. Col. 1. 13. *Who hath delivered us from the power of darknes,*
and

and translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, 1 Pet. 2. 9, *Who hath call'd you out of darkness into his marvellous Light.* This is the state and Condition of all men before their *Effectual Calling and Vocation*, to be dark, and blind, and ignorant, and in thralldome to sin; as afterward to be indued with *Knowledge*, and *saving Grace*.

The Consideration of this Point is thus far *useful* to us, as it serves to set forth the excellency and *All-sufficiency* of the *Grace of God* in Conversion. The more distant and remote the *Terms* of our Calling are one from the other, the more admirable is our Calling it self as to the *effecting* of it; as it was with *Lazarus* in the raising of him out of his Grave, the longer that he had been dead, the greater matter was it for Christ to call him forth, and to put life again into him; Even so when we shall consider how before Conversion we were dead in Sins and Trespasses, and in a state of *darkness* and *blindness*, it shews a greater power and ability in God, to bring us into a contrary Condition.

And so as an Argument of greater power, so also of greater favour and goodness in God towards us; and therefore consequently a greater ground for thankfulness and acknowledgment from us; the more desperate the disease was, the greater cause of thankfulness for the Recovery; when a man shall look back and consider his danger, he may so much the more admire his deliverance from it. And that's the First thing here propounded to be consider'd about our *effectual Calling*; namely, the *Calling it self* what it is, and that consisting of two particulars; First, *Gods gracious Invitation and offer of Christ* unto us. Secondly, our ready acceptance and receiving of Christ thus offer'd.

The second is the person calling, and that is God himself; it is he to whom this work does properly and principally belong, No man cometh unto me, sayes Christ, except the Father which hath sent me draw him, Joh. 6. 44. So Act. 2. 39. As many as the Lord shall call. Gal. 1. 13. It pleased God to call me by his Grace. 1 Thess. 2. 12. That ye would walk worthy of God who hath call'd you. And 1 Pet. 1. 15, He which hath call'd you, is Holy; It is a Description, whereby God is made known.

This must needs be so from what we have shewn before concerning the Nature and terms of this Calling, being from darkness to light, which are at such a distance one from the other, which none are able to reconcile, but God himself who is Omnipotent and All-sufficient, according to that of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 4. 6, God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.

This it serves, first of all to inform us, that Religion is not a meer Imagination, or a business of mans devising and chusing of his own accord; No, but that it is such as God himself has invited and call'd us to, which therefore we cannot but yield and submit unto; as St. Paul declares of himself in that account which he gives of his own Conversion before King Agrippa, Act. 26. 19. I was not disobedient to the Heavenly Vision. It was an Heavenly Vision, and a Call from God himself, and therefore he would not, nor could not resist it for the powerfulness which was in it.

Secondly, It serves to give us an account of many persons who are the Subjects of this Call, how they come to be so; when we see such a great change and alteration made in some mens minds and lives, as some-

times we may perceive; *Paul of a Persecutor, to become a Preacher; Matthew of a Publican, to be a Disciple; Mary Magdalen of an Harlot, to be a washer of the feet of Christ: And so of the rest.* We learn from hence not to wonder or to think strange of it, because it is the work and operation of God himself, it is he that calls men, and therefore they cannot but yield and submit to his Call, who doth whatsoever he pleases.

Thirdly, It is also very comfortable as to the perfection and consummation of Grace in us, *That he who hath begun a good work in us, will perfect it, &c.* as it is in *Phil. 1. 6.* And so the Scripture it self teaches us to improve it, as *1 Cor. 1. 8. 9.* where the Apostle speaking of the *Corinthian* settlement, and confirmation in Grace to the End, proves it to them from hence; *God is faithful, by whom ye were call'd unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ.* And so again to the like purpose, *1 Thess. 5. 24.* *Faithful is he, who calleth you, who also will do it: where the ground of formal perseverance is made to be effectual Calling; and that as from God.*

Lastly, seeing it is God that calls us, we should therefore be careful to lead a *Godly and Holy life and conversation*, answerable to the nature of him who hath thus called us: This is also the reasoning of Scripture in the places before cited, as *1 Thess. 2. 13,* *That ye would walk worthy of God who hath called you to his Kingdom and Glory,* So *1 Pet. 1. 15,* *As he which hath call'd you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.* When God calls us from the wayes of Sin, it is to make us like to himself; that so being call'd by him, we might live to him. That's also the second particular; to wit, the person calling, which is God himself.

The Third is the Manner, and Means, and Time of calling, both how and when it is perform'd; First, for the manner how, or the means by which, this is in an ordinary course, by the Preaching and Publishing of the Gospel; *Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God,* in *Rom. 10. 17.* God hath sanctified and appointed this Ordinance, as the means of calling us home to himself: Thus it was with *St. Peter's* converts, when they heard they were pricked in their hearts, *Act. 2. 37.* Thus it was with *Lydia,* She attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul, *Act. 16. 14.* Thus it was with the *Jaylor,* the Apostles spake the Word of the Lord unto him, whereby he was converted, *Act. 16. 32.*

Therefore this teaches us accordingly to honour this Ordinance of God, and to set highly by it. Take heed of despising preaching, and the publick Ministry of the Word; but rather attend carefully upon it, as that whereby, in the way which God has set, we come to be effectually call'd. Those that despise preaching, they do consequently despise Conversion and effectual Vocation; forasmuch as this is ordinarily brought about and effected by such means as these are. We should not so much look upon it in regard of the persons who are imply'd in it, poor, and weak, and frail, and mortal men, but in the Wisdom of him that has appointed it, and the effects which are wrought by it, being the power of God to Salvation. Certainly look what esteem we have indeed of our own souls, and care for them, the like esteem will we have of this Ordinance, and of the Dispensers and Ministers of it; upon this account and consideration,

tion. Those that regard their health, they regard *Physick* which is the means of it.

Another thing considerable as to this Calling, is the *Time* and *Season* of it, when it is that men are made partakers of this Blessing; now for this, we find it to be a thing *unlimited* and *undetermin'd*, there's no set or appointed time for it, but some are call'd at one time, and some are call'd at another, as it pleases God in his Providence to dispose it, as we see in the parable in the Gospel, it was with those who were call'd to work in the Vineyard, some were call'd at the *third* hour, and some at the *sixth*, and some at the *eleventh*. Even so is it likewise here in this Call, whereof we now speak; some are call'd in their *youth*, and some in their *riper years*, and others in their *old Age*; though in this last fewest of them: It is true, that it is possible, but very rare, for such persons as have spent the greatest part of their time in a vain and sinful course, to be at last converted when they are going out of the world; I say, it is very rare, and *unusual*, though perhaps possible; and the reason of it is this: Because God for the most part will reap some fruit and benefit of those Graces which he bestows upon us; and that we shew forth the virtues and praises of him that hath called us, 1 Pet. 2. 9. God does not convert a man only to do good to him, but to do good by him: He does not convert a man merely to save him and to bring him to heaven; but to use him, and to imploy him upon Earth; which when he is now dying, and going out of the world, he has not that opportunity to do; therefore the usual time for conversion, is rather before, when men have their parts and strength, and vigor, and are able to do service, that so it may not be slighted or neglected by us.

Beloved, It is a dangerous thing to neglect the present seasons of Grace and effectual Vocation; because if we do so, we know not whether we may ever enjoy them again; for as there is a time for every thing else under the Sun, so amongst the rest for this which we now speak of, of Conversion and coming home to God; which though for the general it be indeed the time of life, yet to such and such particular persons, it may be narrower and shorter than life: As the time for Trading in general is the time of the Market; but the time of making such a bargain in particular, is such a moment of the Market, and he that neglects that moment, he may never again meet with the like. It is possible for a man so to carry himself, as he may out-live the immediate and effectual opportunities of his own Conversion; and it is that which divers do in the Event. There's many a man who for the present is going on in a course of vanity and sin; and it may be God knocks by his Spirit at the door of his heart, checks him, and reproves him for it, and calls upon him to leave and forsake it, calls to him in the Ministry of the Word, calls to him in the Counsel of Friends, calls to him in the girdings and reflexions of his own Conscience, and this he does often and continually, and from day to day: Well, this person for all this goes on and never regards such motions as these are, and invitations of him to peace and reconciliation with God, but it may be falling into loose and carnal Company, or being deeply engaged in some strong and prevailing lust, turns his back, and stops his ears, and hardens his heart, and persisting in a course of Impenitency; now in such a case as this is, Gods Spirit being thus far tryed, and his patience

patience abused, and his Grace despised; he shuts the door of Grace upon him, and never offers it more; according to that of Solomon, Prov. 1. 24. *Because I have called, and ye have refused, I have stretched out mine hands, and no man regarded, &c. Therefore I will laugh at your calamities, &c.*

The sum of all comes to this purpose, to teach us all therefore to attend upon Gods calling of us; *To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* Neglect not this *Sermon*, it may be the last thou may'st hear, this season it may be the last thou may'st have; do not defer and put off thy repentance to following times; *But close with Gods present calling and moving of thee.* And this for the *Means*, and *Manner*, and *Time* of this *Calling*, which is here mention'd.

The *Fourth* and last thing here considerable, is the *Persons* who are the subjects of this Call. These for the general are the *Elected*, as it follows in the next Verse, which in its place, God-willing, we shall speak to; *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called.* *Effectual Vocation*, it is a fruit and consequent of *Election*, and does proceed from Gods Eternal Decree upon such and such *Persons*, who are therefore here said emphatically to be the called according to his purpose: This for the general. For the particular, This *Effectual Calling*, it reaches all the several ranks and conditions of men in the world, God calls some of all sorts; but most of the meanest. The Apostle Paul hath determin'd it for us, 1 Cor. 1. 26, *Brethren ye see your calling, how that not many wise men according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish, &c.* He does not say not any, but not many; God has his number in all sorts of persons, and he will have so, to shew both the fulness and the freeness of his Grace, that he may do good to many, and that he may do good where himself pleases to do it.

Therefore let none either ingross this mercy, or despair of it. Let none ingross it to themselves, as if it belong'd to none, but unto them; nor let none despair of it for themselves, as if it did not belong to them at all; God is no respecter of persons, nor yet of Conditions in this matter: There is neither Jew, nor Greek; there is neither bond, nor free; there is neither male, nor female; there is neither rich, nor poor; high nor low, who are exempted in this particular, whosoever they be that are within the compass of humane Nature, they are within the compass of this Heavenly Calling, and Vocation, as capable of it.

The main use therefore of all, is from hence to teach us to make our Calling and Vocation sure to us: seeing there is such a thing as this is, as we have now heard described unto us, which whosoever do not partake of, are none of Gods Children, nor have an interest in this glorious Privilege of all things working to their good; it concerns us then to see that we for our part be of the number of them, who are so qualified, we are all lost by Nature, see, whether we be recovered by Grace; whether besides our common Calling, as we partake of the outward means of Grace in the Privileges of the visible Church, we are inwardly and effectually called, as submitting to Gods gracious Call and Invitation of us. How may this be discern'd?

Namely, By our closing with those *Injunctions and Commands* which God at any time layes upon us, so far forth as any Persons have obeyed Gods

Gods call in general, and in the first work of Conversion, they will so much the less stick at any duty in particular, which God does require to be perform'd by them, his command will have a great force and efficacy upon them, though never so contrary and opposite to their own particular disposition and inclination.

And they will withall have some further ability hereunto than Nature does give them; this Calling where it is in the Efficacy of it, it makes men of a noble disposition, so as to abhor all base and scandalous courses, as unsuitable to them; and to abhor all loose and ungodly Company, as unworthy of them. Those that are call'd out of Babylon, they will disdain all such Persons as are Citizens of it.

Those who are themselves effectually call'd, they will have an high esteem and account both of their calling it self, as also of all other Persons who are partakers of the same Calling with them. They will be ready to magnifie their own profession, and the professors of it, there will be a zeal for the keeping of it up, and a jealousy upon every thing that may hinder it, as we see it was with Demetrius and his fellows in their occupation, *Acts 19. 25.*

And last of all, there will be an indeavour likewise to bring others into the same Condition; those that are effectually call'd themselves, they will study the Calling of their Brethren, and Friends, and near Relations: As we see it is sometimes in the world, if a man be of a good, and rich, and profitable Calling himself, he will indeavour to bring up his Children if he can to that Calling too; Even so will it be also in Religion, I, and my house. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the first thing considerable of us in this Effectual Calling; to wit, the Condition it self, To them which are called.

The Second is the ground of this Condition, as also of the privilege annex unto it, and that is the Purpose, and Good pleasure, and Decree of God, According to his purpose. This it implyes two things in it as pertinent hereunto; First, That it is Absolute and Independent; and Secondly, That it is Firm and Immutable.

First, This Calling here spoken of, it is absolute and independent; It is according to Gods purpose, not according to our desert; Thus *2 Tim. 1. 9. Who hath saved us, and call'd us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*

This must needs be so; because we see by plain experience, that those who might be thought most of all to deserve it, are many times excluded from it, whiles others are taken in. Prophane Persons oftentimes converted, whiles Civil Persons are suffer'd to run on. The Publicans and Harlots went into the Kingdom of Heaven before the Pharisees, *Mat. 21. 31.*

Therefore let us from hence learn to abhor all Doctrine of Merit, and conceit of disposing our selves to the Efficacy of Gods converting Grace. Let us give God the whole Glory of all. Our Calling is Absolute.

Secondly, It is also unchangeable, as the purpose it self, from whence it proceeds; the Gifts and Calling of God are without Repentance, that is, they are such, as whereof he does never repent of there, where he vouchsafes them, *Rom. 11. 29.* And *Jer. 32. 40. I will put my fear into their hearts, and they shall not depart from me.*

The

The Consideration hereof makes much for the *Comfort* of Believers against falling from *Grace*; and further it teaches us not to repent of Christianity our selves, or the Calling and Profession of it; seeing God does not repent of calling us, we should not repent of being called. And seeing he disposes all Good unto us according to his *immutable purpose*, we should labour to cleave unto him also with full purpose of heart, as it is in *Act. II. 23.*

Lastly, We see here the ground of the *Universal Happiness* of Gods Children, and in particular the certainty of the Priviledge above-mention'd of *all things working to their Good*. This it cannot but be so, because it is according to Gods purpose; and whatever God hath purposed, it shall most certainly come to pass.

From hence it comes to pass that nothing whatsoever shall hinder the Salvation of Gods Elect; because God hath appointed them to Salvation, and purposed to do thus with them. Hence the worst things that are, as they may seem to be, even Afflictions themselves shall advantage them, and prove helpful to them, because they have this Decree of God passing upon them; And he that hath purposed the End hath likewise purposed all the means tending and conducing to that end, whereof this is one amongst the rest; Even Afflictions sanctify'd to them.

So much for that; to wit, the Persons interested in this Priviledge of Universal Improvement; Namely, such as are the Children of God; and that especially under a double Description; First, from their Christian Affection, of such as love God; and secondly, from their Effectual Vocation, of such as are the called, according to his purpose.

S E R M O N



SERMON XXXIII.

R O M. 8. 29.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren.

There are two things especially which do conduce to the making up of a good Estate, The Matter of it, and the Title of it. The Matter as to the Nature of the things themselves, whereof it consists; and the Title as to the Assurance which they have of it, who lay claim unto it: And both of these are eminently considerable in the Estate and condition of the Saints and Servants of God. As for the Matter of their Condition, it is as great and large as may be, for it is the Concurrence and Co-operation of all things, to their best advantage. And for the title to their Condition, it is as sure and certain as may be, and which they know to be so; for it is founded upon the immutable Decree of God himself, who are the call'd according to his purpose; which latter the Apostle had mention'd in the close of the 28th. Verse of this present Chapter, which we finish'd the last day. And now having there let fall such a Word as that was concerning Gods purpose, he does think fitting here further to pursue it, and to amplify and enlarge himself upon it in the following and succeeding Verses; And in particular in this 29th. Verse, which I have now read unto you, For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conform'd, &c.

IN the Text it self there are three general Parts considerable; First, Gods Eternal purpose and Decree concerning his Children, Whom he did fore-know, he did predestinate. Secondly, The End or Term which this Decree is carried unto, to be conform'd to the Image of his Son. Thirdly, the Limitation of this Conformity of the Saints to Christ, That he might be the first-born among many Brethren.

We begin with the first of these Parts; to wit, Gods eternal Purpose and decree concerning his Children, whom he did fore-know, he did predestinate. In which words there are three propositions further observable of us: First, That there is in God a fore-knowledge of certain persons from all Eternity. Secondly, That there is a predestination of those persons whom God did fore-know. Thirdly, That Gods fore-knowledge is the cause of his predestination.

P p p

First,

First, I say, there is in God a *fore-knowledge* of certain persons from all Eternity: This Point it must first be explain'd, and then confirm'd and enlarged by us. For the opening and explaining of it to us, we must understand thus much; that *knowledge*, and so *fore-knowledge* in God, it may be taken and consider'd of by us two manner of wayes: Either first of all for a *general Apprehension*; there's a Notional knowledge, and an Affectionate; a knowledge as to discern, and a knowledge so as to accept: Or secondly, for a *special Approbation* according to the former sense, so he is said to foreknow all things and persons, which are in the world, *Act. 15. 18, Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world.* Yea, according to this sense, he is said to fore-know even wicked men and Reprobates themselves, and all the Actions that come from them: As in *Act. 2. 23.* It is said there of Christ, that he was deliver'd by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God: God fore-saw, and so fore-knew that Judas would betray and deliver Christ to be Crucified. But this is not that which we are to understand here in the Text; such a fore-knowledge as this is, which is of meer Apprehension.

Therefore secondly, There is a *fore-knowledge* as I said, which is of *special Approbation*; God fore-knows so far forth as he accepts and takes a liking to any particular person. And thus are we to take it in this place, as also in some others besides: Thus *2 Tim. 2. 19, The Lord knoweth them that are his.* Knoweth them, that is, he accepts and approves of them. So *Rom. 11. 2. God hath not cast away his people whom he fore-knew;* that is to say, whom he hath from all Eternity chosen and set apart for his People, and ordain'd to everlasting Salvation. This kind of fore-knowledge in God, is call'd by the Apostle Paul, *The good pleasure of his will,* *Eph. 1. 5.* which the Apostle Peter also refers to, *1 Pet. 1. 2. Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through Sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, &c.* This is that fore-knowledge which is here now mention'd in this Scripture before us. Gods severing of certain persons from all Eternity out of the common lump of Mankind, for the bestowing of Eternal happiness and Salvation upon them for their particulars.

This is that which the Scripture does abundantly declare unto us in sundry places. Thus *Joh. 17. 24.* Christ speaking to his Father concerning his Members, sayes, *Thou lovedst them as thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.* In *Eph. 1. 4. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world,* In *2 Thess. 2. 13. God hath from the beginning chosen you to Salvation, &c.* And *2 Tim. 1. 9, According to his purpose and grace, which he hath given us in Christ Jesus before the World began.* Hence is Gods love to his Children said to be now manifest, and made to appear; which implyes that it was in being before. Those whom God calls in time, he loved from everlasting, and before ever the world was made. This is the Truth which is here exhibited to us.

Where for our better proceeding in it, it is requisite we should clear it from a mistake, which is sometime fasten'd upon it. There are some persons, who not rightly apprehending this Point in hand, have from hence affirm'd, that God does justify his Children from all Eternity; that is, that he does from thence look upon them as Righteous persons, and bear a Fatherly Affection towards them. Now this is very absurd and

and erroneous, and a mis-improvement of *this present truth*, which does by no means lay any ground or foundation for such a conceit as *that is*. That love which God bears to such and such persons in *their Election*, it is consistent with *his hatred* of the *same persons* so *elect*ed before their *actual and effectual Calling*. As for instance and example thus, The Apostle Paul, he was a precious *Vessel of Election* from all *eternity*, and before ever the world was made, and so in *that* respect might be said to have been beloved of God; yet till it pleased God at last to call him, and to convert him, and by his Grace to bring him home to himself; he was all that time in a *condition of hatred*. Paul whiles he was a *Persecutor of the Church*, he was all that while an *Enemy to God*, and God to him; although in *Gods Purpose and Decree* he was at the same time a most *eminent Apostle*. Thus 'tis said also of the *Jews*, Rom. 11. 28. That as concerning the Gospel they were *Enemies*, but as concerning the Election they were *Beloved*: Concerning the Gospel they were *Enemies*, that is, in respect of their present carriage and behaviour towards the Gospel, in their *rejecting and opposing* of it, and rebelling against it. But as concerning the Election they were *beloved*, namely, in respect of what God in his *secret purpose* and counsel did intend and determine to do with them.

For this purpose we must know thus much, that there is a *two-fold* love in God, which he may be conceiv'd to bear to any person; The one is a love of *good-will*, or favour remote, *Amor Benevolentia*. And the other is a love of *delight* or contentation, *Amor Complacencia*; according to the former love, so he loves a person in *Election*, and before he is called; loves him so far forth as he *does intend* in time to call him, and so to *save* him. But according to the latter love, so he loves a person only in *vocation* and *actual conversion*: He loves him so as to *imbrace* him, and to take pleasure and delight in him, no otherwise then as he is *effectually called*, and has the work of Grace wrought in his heart. God hates all the workers of Iniquity, Psal. 5. 5. Mark, not only the works, but the Workers: And that some of them also whom he does purpose in due time to convert and to call home to himself. As a man, for some reasons in himself, may purpose to adopt such a *prodigal* and spendthrift, to be his Heir, and yet for the present abhors those licentious courses which are now taken by him. We must therefore here carefully distinguish betwixt *Election* and *Justification*: Election is an eminent Act in God, determin'd in Himself, and so as Himself also is from all eternity. But *Justification* it is a *transient* Act in God which passes upon the *Creature*, and so is accomplish'd in time upon such conditions as are presupposed in the Creator. God elects and chooses us to Salvation without any respect to Faith, whether *actual* or *else foreseen*, as the condition of that Election: But he does not justify us and accept us to Salvation, without Faith laying hold upon Christ, as the condition whereupon we are *justified*. But so much for that, the revealing of the Doctrine of Election and Justification both together.

Another thing here to be cleared concerning Gods fore-knowledge of his people, is, in what condition God does look upon man in *Predestination*; whether he looks upon him before his Fall, and in the general notion of Creation; or whether he looks upon him as a *last* Creature, and

as fallen in *Adam*? I shall not trouble you long with the discussion and resolution of this Point. There are divers of equal worth and note of either Opinion; though for mine own part, I must confess I do incline rather to the latter, so as to think that God in his Decree of *Election and Reprobation*, did look upon *all Mankind* as fallen in *Adam*, whereof a part he purposed to restore, and to bestow eternal life upon them; and the rest he purposed to pass over, and to leave in that miserable condition which he knew that they would fall into: This I conceive to be that which is most agreeable to the Word of God.

That which may serve as an Argument to confirm this unto us is:

First, Because the Scripture still speaks of Christ as the *Head* of all the *Elect*, According as he has chosen us in Him, Ephes. 1.4. Now the mentioning of Christ does respect man consider'd as fallen: The naming of a Saviour does suppose a man as possible to be lost, who otherwise would have no need of him.

Secondly, In this business of Gods Decree, his scope and intent is to set forth both his *Mercy* and his *Justice*. Now *Mercy* has for its Object *Misery*; And *Justice* (we speak of that which is vindicative) has for its Object *Sin*. Therefore man in the *Act* of *Predestination*, is look'd upon by God as in a *sinful and miserable condition*, and not meerly as a *Creature*.

Thirdly, If we look upon *Mankind* considered purely in its *Creation*, so there was no difference of Gods love to one man above another. All men in *Adam* as standing have eternal life made over unto them; whiles therefore any persons are deprived of it, it must be upon supposal of their rebellion and falling away. That which is appointed to all men upon the condition of *Obedience*, it seems to be denied to none, but upon supposition of *Disobedience*.

Though this is further to be added as concerning this Point in hand, that what is spoken of Gods *fore-knowledge*, and the order of it, is to be understood as spoken according to our capacity: For the Lord our God being Himself a most pure and perfect Understanding, he doth by one act, without Priority or Posteriority, know, conceive, and discern all things at once, which are presented to Him together, and so decreed from all eternity, as present before him. But for us men, who are but finite Creatures indued with Reason, we do conceive, understand, and discern one thing after another (and cannot do otherwise) according as things do in a certain order depend upon one another. And because we do so our selves, therefore are we wont to attribute the like order to the *Divine Understanding*. And upon this account do we lay this conclusion which we have now before us, of Gods looking upon man in *Predestination* as in a *laps'd and fallen condition*.

To pass over this point briefly, which possibly every one may not be so capable of, though not altogether to be omitted: That which lies chiefly upon our selves, is, to improve the main Doctrine of all to our best advantage and edification, for the Use and Application of it, which comes to this.

First, Seeing this is so, that God loves us from all eternity, and hath fore-known us with a Knowledge of *Approbation*; this may then very much

much *in* courage us as to the *assurance*, and *constancy*, and *continuance* of his love to us, as such which will never *fail*, or be taken away from us: It is said of the mercy of the Lord, *That it is from Everlasting to Everlasting*. Now how is *that*? why, it is from everlasting in *Predestination*, and it is to everlasting in *Salvation*: Gods love, it is of *equal* extent in the *Consequence*, as it is in the *Original*. As a *Tree*, it is as much in the *height* of it as it is in the *depth*: And *Waters*, they are as much in their *fall* as they are in their *rise*, *Rom. 5. 7, 8, 9, 10.*

Secondly, it teaches us also to *love God again*, who hath thus loved us. All love it is still so much the *more excellent*, as it hath been of the *longer continuance*, and as it is any thing more *free and independant* upon the party beloved. Now this is the *love of God* in his *Election* and *Fore-knowledge* of us; it is such as hath *always been towards us*, for he hath born it to us *from all Eternity*. And it is such as is *independant* upon *our selves*, for it was before our selves had any *being in the world*. And so much may suffice of the first branch, that there is in God a fore-knowledge of *certain persons from all eternity*.

The second is this, That there is a *predestination* of those Persons whom God doth *fore-know*. This is the exprefs Doctrine of the Text; *Whom he did fore-know, he did predestinate*: By *Predestination* we do here understand an *appointing* or *fore-ordaining* to eternal life. Those whom God hath from eternity made *choice of*, and fastn'd his love upon them, those he hath most certainly appointed to the attaining of everlasting *Salvation*, and will *undoubtedly* in his own *due time* bring them to it. This is the Point which we have here before us, and it is also taught in other places besides, as most directly, in *Eph. 1. 4, 5.*

This Doctrine, it was first of all taught by *Christ Himself*, in *Matth. 11. 25. Matth. 20. 16. 24. 22.* Then by the *Apostles* of Christ, *Rom. 9. Ephes. 1. 2 Tim. 2, &c.* Peter, *1 Pet. 1. 2. 2 Pet. 1. 10, &c.* Then by all succeeding *Ministers* and *Teachers* in all *Times* and *Ages* of the Church, they have been careful still upon occasion to declare this Truth to the people of God. And as it hath been taught by the *Ministers*, so is it likewise *beneficial to the Church* in the knowledge of it, and that in two particulars especially:

First, As it serves to *strengthen our Faith* in that *Salvation* which is to be enjoyed through *Jesus Christ*: For whiles we shall consider that *our Salvation* hath for the foundation of it the eternal *Purpose and Decree of God*, we are hence assured that it is such as shall *not fail*, or come to nought, forasmuch as the *Decree of God* is *irreversible*.

Secondly, It serves to *kindle our love to God back again*. The more frequently we think of this, the more *servently* shall we be inflamed with that, being well digested and set home upon us. Thus is this Doctrine of *Predestination* very useful and profitable for us.

Therefore accordingly it should teach us to *study it*, and to labour to be acquainted with it, especially to see that we have a *share and interest* in it, as the Apostle Peter advises us, in *2 Pet. 1. 10. Wherefore brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure, &c.* Indeed, I must add this, that we be *modest and sober in those things*, and not pry too curiously into those things which are above our reach, but to take them so as the Scripture hath *propounded* them, and *revealed* them to us; and to

look

look at those things more in their effects than in their causes. We should not begin with this *Doctrine of Election*, but rather with the *Doctrine of Vocation*, and judge of the one by the other. We need not to climb up into Heaven, and to search Gods Records there, whether or no our Names be written in the Book of Life; but rather look first into our own Hearts and Consciences, and see how it is there with us; whosoever they be that are sanctified, they may be sure they are elected. Be thou but willing to repent and believe, and to embrace the Gospel, and to receive Christ upon his own terms and conditions, and to do that which he requires of thee, to be perform'd by thee, and never trouble thy self further about this Election, as a thing which thou needst not doubt of, or call in question. Those who are effectually called, and converted, and brought home to Christ, they are such as are fore-known by God; And those whom God has fore-known, he has predestinated. That's the second Proposition.

The third and last is this, That Gods fore-knowledge is the cause of this Predestination; when the Apostle sayes here in this Text, *Whom he did fore-know, he did predestinate*: He does not only point out to us the thing, to wit, predestination it self; nor he does not only point out to us the persons, to wit, such as are fore-known, but he does also point out to us the Order and Connexion, and lawful dependance of those things one upon another: That namely God did therefore predestinate, because he did fore-know; so that the Observation here is this, That the reason why God hath pre-ordained and fore-appointed any persons to Salvation, it is his own meer good will and pleasure, and nothing else. Pelagians, and their Followers, they do indeed teach us, That Gods fore-knowledge is the cause of predestination. But how and in what sense and consideration do they so teach it? namely, by taking fore-knowledge for an act of simple apprehension, and bare fore-sight of that which is to come. As for example thus, They say that God does therefore elect and fore-appoint Peter to Salvation, because he does foresee that Peter will in time believe and repent, and persevere in Grace to the end; upon which account they suspend Gods Decree upon somewhat inherent in man: but this now is directly contrary to this Doctrine which we have here before us. If we take fore-knowledge in God for an Act of simple fore-sight, and pre-apprehension of that which is future; so it is not the cause of Gods Decree, but Gods Decree is rather the ground of it: God does not therefore Decree a thing because he fore-sees it, but he fore-sees it because he decrees it: What-ever he does decree, that it shall be; he does fore-see that it will be, and nothing else.

That knowledge which some persons contend for, which they call *Scientia media vel conditionalis*, A middle or conditional knowledge, betwixt that of simple intelligence and that of vision; whereby they make God to fore-know what a free Creature will do in such and such circumstances, antecedent to his Decree, about that performance, is a meer fancy and decree of their own, and such as has no ground at all for it, either in Scripture or reason it self: Nay indeed, it is repugnant to it, forasmuch as they make that to come within the compass of knowledge, which is not under the notion of certainty. There is nothing which can be known that it will be, which is not certain to be; and there is nothing which is certain to be, but it is ordain'd that it shall be: Whatever comes

comes under God's *Prescience*, it first comes under his *Decree*; so that taking God's fore-knowledge in *this* sense for an Act of *simple fore-sight* and pre-apprehension; so it is not the cause of his Predestination, but rather the contrary.

But therefore here in the Text we are to take *fore-knowledge* in God for an Act of special *favour and approbation*, and so for his good *pleasure and will*, as I have before explained it: *Whom he did fore-know, he did predestinate*; that is, whom he was pleased from all eternity to pitch his *free-love* and favour upon as *Vessels of mercy*, those he did accordingly appoint to *eternal salvation*. And here now according to *this sense*, we have the Point clear before us, That God's fore-knowledge in *this acception* is the cause of Predestination. This is the *Last and Ultimate Resolution* of Gods Decree about *mans salvation*, to wit, the meer good will and pleasure of God. And so the Scripture carries it in divers other places besides, as Rom. 9. 18, *He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy*, Ephes. 1. 5, 6, *Having predestinated us according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the Glory of his Grace*. And verse 11. *Being predestinated according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*. So 1 Pet. 1. 2. *Elected according to the fore-knowledge of God*. And again, Rom. 9. 11. *The Children being not yet born, and having done neither good nor evil, &c.*

This must needs be so upon this account: First, Because nothing out of God can be a cause of Gods Decree, which is intrinsecal to him. It is his *Will* which is *Himself*, and so no Creature can be said to have any influence upon it. Therefore neither *Merits* fore-seen, nor *Faith* fore-seen, nor *Repentance*, or *perseverance in Grace*, can be the causes of our Election, but only the free will and good pleasure of God Himself. Faith, and Repentance, and Perseverance, they are the Conditions of Salvation; but they are not the Conditions of Election: They are such *wayes and means* as through which alone God will save us; but they were not Motives and Arguments to God for which he did choose us. This is purely and meerly from Himself, and not from any thing in the *Creature*.

Again further, Secondly, That cannot be said to be the cause of Predestination, which is indeed the effect and consequent of it. But now Faith and Repentance, and an holy Life, and all such things as those are, they be the fruits and consequents of our Election, and the ends and terms which our Election is carried unto; therefore they cannot be the causes or movers of it. That this is so as we deliver, is clear from the plain Text of Scripture, as Ephes. 1. 4, *According as he hath chosen us in him, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love*. Mark, He hath chosen us that we should be holy; not because we were holy, or were fore-seen to be such as would be so. So Act. 13. 48. It is not as many as believed were ordain'd to eternal life, but *as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed*. We believe because we are elected; and not elected therefore, because we do believe. And so also here in the very Text, we are predestinated to be conformable to Christ, as the end and effect of our Predestination: Our conformity to Christ is not the cause or ground of our Predestination.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It cannot be that any other then God's own good pleasure should be the cause of our *Predestination*, and not any thing in our selves, because this business of *predestination* is an Act of *special favour and goodness*, and is set forth to us in Scripture as a demonstration of the riches of *Gods Grace*. But now if any thing *in us* or out of *God Himself* had any influence upon it, this would be very *diminishing and derogating* in this particular. Therefore neither our own *Faith fore-seen*; no nor the *merits of Christ himself fore-seen*, were the cause of God's electing of us, but his own free good will and good pleasure towards us; I say, not the Merits of *Christ Himself*. Observe that, Christ with his Merits is the cause of our *Salvation*, but not the cause of our *Election*: We are not chosen for Christ, but in Christ. It is not because we are in Christ that we are chosen, but we are chosen that we may be in Christ; our being in Christ is not the motive to our Election, but the term and effect of it. The cause of our Election is the sole mercy and love of God consider'd in Himself, as a fruit of which love and election he does bestow Christ upon us, as a means to bring us to that end whereunto he has ordain'd us. And so the Point stands clear and immoveable before us, That God's fore-knowledge is the only cause of our Predestination.

The Use of this Point thus explained, comes to this:

First, As a *confutation* of such persons as teach the contrary, that namely, the reason why God chooses any to life, is, because he fore-sees that they will in time *repent and believe*, and hold out to the end in goodness. And so they make the last Resolution of the decree and purpose of God to be the will and working of man: This is contrary to the present Doctrine in hand, which is, *That whom God loves, those he predestinates*.

Secondly, This makes very much for our exceeding comfort and consolation, as to the certainty of that Salvation which we expect and look for by Christ. It is founded upon good terms, while it is founded upon the good will of God, and not upon any thing in our selves. And we may from hence be assured that God will save us, because he hath freely set his love upon us; where we find the effects of the one, we may there confidently conclude upon the other.

This Doctrine which we are now upon, it is so far forth a Doctrine of Comfort, as it takes all out of our selves, and our own deservings. Doctrines of *Arrogancy and Presumption*, they are for the most part Doctrines of *Despair*, because indeed they are such as will not hold out, nor support a man when he stands in greatest need of them. But Doctrines of free Grace and Favour, they are Doctrines of special comfort and encouragement, because they reduce all to God, who is able to perform what he promises, and to do all that he undertakes.

And yet withall it teaches us also (by way of caution) not to cast all neither upon Decree, and the secret counsel of God, which is not so discernable of us, but (as I in part hinted before) to have an eye rather to the effects and consequents of it in our effectual calling and sanctification which is the last discovery hereof unto us. For though our salvation itself begins from Gods Election, yet the manifestation of it to us begins from our vocation. And we have no other way to make sure to us our Election,

Election, then by first making sure to us our Calling. And so now I have done with the first general part of the Text, which is God's Purpose and Decree about his Children, in these words, *Whom he did fore-know, he did predestinate.*

The second is the end or term which this Decree of his is carried unto, in these words, *To be conform'd to the Image of his Son*: From whence we may observe thus much, That every true Believer is appointed to be made like unto Christ, and to have his Image stamp't upon him. Look as Christ was in a sort made like unto us, so must we also for our parts be made like unto Him.

There's a three-fold Conformity which a Believer is said to have to Christ; Of Holiness; Of Suffering; Of Glory. First, Of Holiness and Sanctification; Every true Child of God he is predestinated to be conformed to the Image of Christ in this; that is, *to be holy as he was holy.* And this again to a double purpose: First, In Affection and Disposition, to be carried by the same spirit. Secondly, In life and conversation, to walk in the same way.

First, In affection and disposition, to be carried by the same spirit: Let the same mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus, Phil. 2. 5. And Rom. 8. 9, If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Where, by the Spirit of Christ, we may understand two things: Either first of all, the Holy Ghost Himself, who is the Spirit both of the Father and Son and is said to dwell in us, in the very same verse. Or else secondly, The Graces of the Holy Ghost, and those heavenly dispositions which by Him through Christ are wrought in us. These are here (as we may conceive) commended to us; we then have the Spirit of Christ, when we have such a frame and disposition of Spirit in us, as Christ Himself had. As for instance, Meekness and humility of mind, this was the disposition of Christ, and accordingly it should be in us in conformity to Him. Thus Matth. 11. 29. says Christ himself, of himself to his Disciples, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.* He was full of sweetness and condescension; thought not much of the meanest performances, wherein he might be serviceable to his Servants, even to the very washing of their feet themselves: And accordingly he desires it should be with them also, as he had given them an Example, John 13. 15.

So also for remitting of Injuries, we see how ready he was to this likewise, in that he did good to them that hated him, and prayed for them that persecuted him. And the same frame of Spirit is in like manner required of us, Col. 3. 13, *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another: if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, even so also do ye.* And Rom. 15. 2. *Let every one please his Neighbour, for his good to edification: For Christ also pleased not himself.* Still we have Christ propounded to us for a pattern and example in this particular; yea, as to general and universal purity, 1 John 3. 3, *Everyone that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure.* Thus are we to be like to Christ in spirit and disposition.

Again secondly, In life and conversation; we must be like to Him in this also: 1 John 2. 6, *He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk even as he walked.* St. Paul he was a Follower of Christ, and

desires the *Corinthians* to be so far forth *Followers* of him: *Be ye Followers of me, even as I am of Christ*, 1 Cor. 11. 1. And *Ephes. 5. 1, 2. Be ye Followers of God as dear Children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, &c.*

When we say, That we are to be like to *Christ*, and to do that which he did; this is rightly to be understood by us, and in that sense wherein it is spoken; namely, as to those kind of actions alone which are imitable by us, and which it lies in our way to follow, and to conform unto, and to take him for our Example. There are three sorts of Actions of *Christ* which are mention'd in Scripture: First, His work of *Mediation*. Secondly, His working of *Miracles*. And thirdly, His works of *Obedience*, and conformity to the Law of God in all those moral Actions which came from him. The two former of these they are wholly beyond our imitation, and it is not for us to attempt them: They make for our Comfort and Instruction, but they are not for our *Praetise* and Imitation; but the latter of these is that which we are here call'd to, and is commended unto us. When we are required to be conformed to his Image, that we be holy as he was holy, and so walk as he also walked in his general conversation in the world. As he was still doing good wheresoever he came, and it was his meat and drink to do the will of his Father which sent him; even so it should be also with us: We all with open face beholding as in a glass the Glory of the Lord, shall be changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, as it is in 2 Cor. 3. 18.

The consideration of this Point, for the Use of it, may serve as a discovery to us of our estate and condition in Grace, whether or no we are true Believers and Members of *Christ*. If we be so, we are such as are conformed to the Image of *Christ*, and that in this sense and explication whereof we now speak, as to holiness and sanctification; we have the same Spirit that he had, and we do the same things that he did, and we live the same lives that he lived: In every thing still the same, and made like unto him in this particular. And therefore let us try and examine our selves by this Rule, whether or no it be thus with us. It is not the profession of *Godliness* and Religion which will here serve the turn, or some speculative knowledge of it, but a practical correspondency with *Christ*, in his Spirit, and Life, and Conversation. As the Apostle speaks to the *Corinthians*, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Examine your selves, whether ye be in the Faith, prove your own selves: Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be Reprobates.* Mark, That *Jesus Christ* is in you. How is *Jesus Christ* said to be in them? namely, by his Spirit, and the power of his Grace, producing such effects in them as were agreeable to the life of *Christ*. This was to have *Jesus Christ* in them, and this was that which the Apostle *Paul* did here require of them.

This is that also which is required of every *Christian*: In which regard we may daily observe and take notice of abundance of Professors which come exceedingly short of that which indeed they should be, in that they are so unlike and so unsutable to *Christ* Himself. *Christ*, he was meek and lowly, they proud and lofty; *Christ*, he was tender and merciful, they barbarous and cruel; *Christ*, he was patient and charitable, they impa-

impatient and revengeful; Christ, he was spiritual and heavenly-minded, they carnal, and minding earthly things; Christ, he was holy and harmless, and undefiled, and separate from Sinners, as the Apostle proclaims him, they oftentimes filthy and mischievous, and polluted, and separate from their Brethren. This is the vast and wide difference which is betwixt Christ and such kind of persons, as shews them to be none of his.

For *our selves*, as to our own particulars, it concerns us to look to it, and to consider how it is with us; For God will Himself one day make a serious *search and inquiry* hereinto. He will ask concerning every man (as he did once about the peice of money) *Whose Image and Super-scription be bath upon him*, whether the Image of Christ, or the Image of Satan: And according as it is *in this respect with him*, so shall be also his *future condition*. Men may possibly sometimes herein deceive others, and oftentimes do so: *False Apostles*, like deceitful Workers, they transform themselves into the Apostles of Christ; and the Ministers of Satan, they are transformed into the Ministers of Righteousness, as Satan himself also is transformed into an Angel of Light, as it is in *2 Cor. 11. 13, 14, 15*. But it shall not be alwayes so with them, this *Vail and Vizard* shall be one day pluckt off from their faces, and the Lord will shew and discover them to be that which indeed they are.

Therefore let us all judge our selves afore-hand, and bring our selves to this *discovery*; see how far forth we are indeed like unto Christ, and conform'd to *his Image* in this sense in which we now take it, that so accordingly we may be the better approved and accepted of God. We have all of us *by nature* the Image of the old man upon us; we should therefore endeavour by Grace to find at last the Image of the new; *after the Image of him that created us*, Col. 3. 10. *That so as we have born the Image of the earthly, so we may also bear the Image of the heavenly*, 1 Cor. 15. 49.

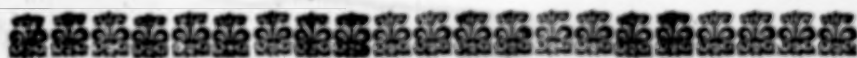
For this purpose, let us see how far forth we can *mortifie sin*, and do that which God requires of us. This is to be made *conformable to Christ*, to be like to him both in *his death*, and in *his Resurrection*: That as Christ died to destroy sin, and rose again to the glory of God, so that was also to die to sin, and live to Righteousness, as it is in Rom. 6. 4, 5, *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father: even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death: we shall be also into the likeness of his Resurrection.* And that's the first Application, as it serves by way of *discovery*.

Secondly, It serves by way of *Direction*, seeing those who are the Children of God, they are thus conform'd to the *Image of Christ*. This may therefore serve as a good mark and rule to *our selves*, in any thing which is to be *done by us*, or in any condition which happens to us; we should still set Christ before us, and think and consider with our selves what He would have done in such and such *cases*, and in such *circumstances* as we are fallen into. And that which upon good grounds, and in all likelihood, we may think He would do, even the same let us do likewise. *Scholars* are likeliest to do best, when they write after *their Copy*; even so is it likewise with us, when we conform to Christ, when we tread in his steps, we shall be sure not to do amiss. Q q q 2 But

But alas! how few are there that walk by this rule, or conform to this pattern. The generality of people in the world study rather to be fashioned to the world, and to be conform'd to that: If there be any custom, or practise, or fashion more vain and ridiculous then other, that's that which most kind of persons will be sure to take up to themselves, whiles in the mean time the example of Christ, and that pattern which He sets before them is neglected and disregarded by them. This is that which will fall so much the heavier upon them, whiles having a better Copy, they choose to take after that which is worse.

Thirdly, Here's an Item also to all the Enemies and Persecutors of the Saints and Servants of God, to inform them here who it is that they maligne and set themselves against; surely, upon the point, against no other then against Christ Himself. If a man should take the Picture of a Prince, and break it, or trample it under his feet; would this carriage be interpreted to extend it self only to his Picture, or would it not moreover be concluded to redound to the disparagement of his person? Even so when any shall wrong and injure the Saints and Servants of God, who are the lively Representations of Christ; what do they herein but wrong and injure even Christ Himself? *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* sayes Christ there to Paul, when he was going on to make havock of the Church, Act. 9. 7. And so for any other else besides. There are divers people who superstitiously adore Images of Gold, and in the mean time abuse the Children of God, who are the best and truest Image of Him.

Lastly, Whiles it is said here, *That we are predestinated to be conformed to the Image of Christ*; and that this in one sense (as we have hitherto declared) is meant of Holiness; then we see here what I formerly hinted, That our Sanctification, it is a special fruit and effect of our Election, and that which the Lord does mainly and chiefly intend to us in his choosing of us. God hath not only appointed us to Glory, as we shall hear hereafter, but also to Grace, and to good Works, which he hath ordained for us, that we should walk in them, *Ephes. 2. 10. This is the will of God concerning us, even our sanctification, 1 Thess. 4. 4. And he hath chosen us to be holy*, in the place before alledg'd, *Ephes. 1. 4. This*, amongst the rest, is one of those terms whereto this Decree of God does extend, and reach forth it self. Therefore (by the way) such as these as do not labour and endeavour after Holiness, they do consequently what in them lies frustrate a main end, and purpose of his concerning them, which is, by Holiness to bring them to Happiness, and by Sanctification to Salvation: so much for that. And so I have done with the first general, *Of conformity to Christ's Image*, which we are said here to be predestinated unto by God; and that is in point of Holiness. There are two more yet behind, and that is in point of Suffering, and in point of Glory.



S E R M O N XXXIV.

ROM. 8. 29.

*To be conform'd to the Image of his Son, that he might be
the first-born among many Brethren.*

It was a Grave and a Sober speech of St. Cyprian, (in Sym. Fid. p. 128.) out of some of the Ancients, De Deo dicere etiam vera periculosum est. That it is a dangerous and hazzardous matter to speak of God, even that which is True; because although perhaps it may be Truth which we speak of him; yet we may be apt to fail and miscarry in the manner and circumstances of it, and not express our selves answerably to so Great, and Glorious, and Dreadful a Majesty, as God indeed is. But it holds in nothing more than it does in the Doctrine of Gods Decrees and secret Counsels; which are deep and unsearchable Mysteries, and such as cannot possibly be fathom'd, or comprehended by our weak and shallow Capacities: Therefore when at any time we have occasion to treat of them (as now we have) it concerns us to come with all fear and reverence, and trembling, and awfulness to them in our discourses about them. This is that which I have endeavour'd, and desire still we may remember in the handling of this present Text which we have now before us; wherein I have already observ'd three general Parts: First, The Purpose and Decree of God it self, Whom he did fore-know, he did predestinate. Secondly, The End or Term which this Decree of God is carried unto, To be conform'd to the Image of his Son. Thirdly, The limitation of this Conformity of Believers to Christ; So as that he may be the first-born, &c.

The First of these Parts I have already spoken unto at large, and dispatched as ye know, wherein I took notice of three distinct Propositions which I have open'd unto you: First, that there is in God a fore-knowledge of certain persons from all Eternity. Secondly, That there is in God a predestination of those persons whom he foreknew. Thirdly, That Gods fore-knowledge is the cause and only cause of this his predestination.

The Second Part of the Text, which is the End or Term of this Decree; to wit, the Saints conformity to the Image of Christ, I have also entred upon, and only that; where I told you that this their conformity was reducible to a threefold Explication, as wherein it consisted: First, In point of Holiness. Secondly, In point of Suffering. And Thirdly, In point of Glory. I shall now proceed to what is remaining, which is their Conformity of Suffering and Affliction.

THe Second Conformity, in which Believers stand to Christ, is a Conformity of suffering and of Affliction. This was another Image of his whereby he was made known to the world. His Visage

was marr'd more then any man, and his form then the Sons of men, *Esay 52. 14.* And again, *Esay 53. 3,* He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, &c. And so it must likewise be with those who are his Members. They are predestinated to be thus conform'd unto him. Thus *Matth. 16. 24,* If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow me. *Mark 10. 39.* Ye shall drink of the Cup that I drink of, and be baptiz'd with the baptism wherewith I am baptiz'd. *2 Tim. 3. 14.* All that will live Godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. *Act. 14. 22.* We must through many tribulations, enter into the Kingdom of God.

This must needs be so from that near and close Union which is betwixt the Head and the Members, we see in a Natural Body, how the Members conform to the Head, in regard of Condition; If the Head be afflicted, they are subject to be afflicted to, and to suffer with it; and that not only by way of sympathy, and a correspondency of Affection; but likewise in a similitude of Event, and a correspondency of Affliction. If the Head be capable of Diseases, the Members are so likewise; and so it is likewise here in the Body Mystical.

And this in all the particular Explications of it; as first, in the cause of suffering, we are conformable to Christ in this; for as Christ suffer'd for righteousness sake: So must Christians be content to do also, *1 Pet. 2. 21, 22,* Christ suffer'd for us, leaving us an Example, that we should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his lips. We shall have some persons sometimes complaining, Oh! if I had done any thing worthy of such a courage as this is to me, it would not so much trouble me, but I have done nothing which might give occasion for such a carriage as this is towards me; why but therefore upon this consideration hast thou the greater cause to be satisfied; forasmuch as herein thou art the more a partaker of the sufferings of Christ; who suffer'd from them, from whom he had no cause to suffer, and suffer'd for that which was no just ground of suffering to him. As the fore-mention'd Apostle Peter likewise argues to this purpose, *1 Pet. 3. 17, 18,* It is better if the will of God be so that ye suffer for well-doing, then for evil-doing, for Christ also hath so suffer'd, &c.

Secondly, As in the cause of suffering, so also in the kind of suffering, there's a conformity to Christ's Image in this also: There were no Afflictions which were incident to Christ, but they are incident also to his Members; Kind for kind, reproach, disgrace, hatred, outward violence, and death it self in the worst appurtenances and circumstances of it.

Thirdly, In the Manner of suffering; There is in Christians, and so ought to be likewise a conformity to Christ in this also. To suffer with the same Spirit as we find him to have done, Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffer'd, he threatned not; but committed both himself, and his cause to him that judgeth righteously, in *1 Pet. 2. 23.* And so *Esay 53. 7.* He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth: that is to say, after any impatient manner, and as expressing any inordinacy or distemper of Affection in his sufferings. Thus are those who are his Children made conformable to his Image, and that amongst the rest in this particular, in regard of Afflictions.

The

The Consideration of this Point may be thus far useful to us : First; as it may serve to inform us of the state and condition of a Christian what it is. There are many persons who when they hear talk of Christianity, they dream of nothing but ease, and pleasure, and outward contentment and felicity, as the *Disciples of Christ*, their thoughts were all of Temporal preferment; but alas, this is not the business which Gods people for the generality of them are ordained unto; No, but to be rather the contrary, *A poor and an afflicted people*, as they are call'd in *Zeph. 3. 12.* We find a large Catalogue of them, in *Heb. 11. 37, They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were burnt, they were slain with the sword, &c.* This hath been the lot sometimes even of the dearest Servants of God themselves to be thus used; and we may not think strange of it, because herein they are but made *conformable to the Image of the Son of God himself.* The Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord; *If therefore they have call'd the Master of the house Belzebub, how much more shall they call them of his Houshold,* as it is, *Mat. 10. 25.*

Why, But may some say, we see oftentimes how it is otherwise with many persons which find no such matter. To this I answer, that there is no Christian whatsoever, but he is cut out hereunto; If the Lord may please now and then in his Providence so to order it to some particular Christians, as that they perhaps in the event may not partake of the Afflictions of their Brethren, nor suffer that which some others do before them; yet this is more than any can apprehend, promise to themselves, or peremptorily expect at Gods hands. It is that which every one that's a Christian must look upon, as belonging unto him.

Yea, and that also which some way or other, he shall actually be sensible of. All Gods Children, they shall suffer either in one kind or another, or in one degree or another, though not alwayes in one and the same; even reproach and hatred for goodness; it is a kind of *suffering*, and so also to be accounted.

Therefore secondly, this teaches us all to prepare and to provide for suffering, seeing we hear that it is our Destiny, we should all of us make *account of it*, and so be fitted for it: ye shall hear many People sometimes saying thus, *Oh! I never thought to have come into such a condition as this is! Never thought it?* Why, how almost couldst thou think otherwise, if thou thoughtst to be a Professor of Religion? It is true indeed, the particular cases, they are such as men cannot alwayes think of, or guess what they will be aforehand; but for the general state and condition as subject and lyable to Afflictions; That is such as they might very well have expected, and therefore accordingly should they have been fitted and prepared for it. There's no man can think to be a Man, but especially can think to be a Christian, and not think in some one way or other to suffer affliction and persecution; what a great fondness then is it, not to lay up in store for it, and to get such a stock of Grace and Resolution aforehand, as may so much the better support and sustain under it.

Thirdly, We have hence also a ground of Patience and Comfort in Afflictions, which do at any time fall upon us, that they are not such things

things as do come to us by chance, or which are carried at random; but by special Order, and Dispensation from God *himself*, who hath predestinated us, and set us apart to this *Conformity* with *Christ our Head*. It was the Argument which the Apostle Paul used to the *Thessalonians*, in *1 Thess. 3. 3*, *That no man should be moved by these Afflictions: for your selves know; that ye were appointed thereunto.* If they were such things as came unawares, had never been look'd for, or expected, they might perhaps have had some cause for a little trouble and perplexity about them: But now whiles they were appointed to them, they had the more cause to be patient under them.

And that for this reason especially, because it was a sign that they came to them in abundance of good will to them, and with respect had to their good; and this as I conceive, is the main and principal scope and drift of this present Text of Scripture which we have now in hand, if we do but seriously reflect upon it.

The Apostles intent in this Chapter is to perswade the *believing Romans*, and in them all other Christians to a patient *induring of the Cross*: And for this purpose he brings many *Reasons and Arguments* which we have formerly met withall, to inforce this Counsel upon them. Amongst the rest, *this* is one in the 28th. Verse of this Chapter; *That, all these things whatsoever they be, they shall work together for their good.* Now, how does he prove *that*? why, even here now by this present Consideration, *That whom he did fore-know, he did predestinate to be conform'd to the Image of his Son.* There is nothing which God does fore-ordain, or pre-appoint and design to his Children; but it is in special love unto them, and tending to their greatest advantage: Now this is that which he does by their Afflictions, and therefore they must needs make for their good.

And mark again (for a further Illustration of it) in what terms he propounds it to perswade us the more effectually of it; *To be conform'd to the Image of his Son.* Why does the Apostle say so, and not rather in plain terms? to be in a suffering and afflicted condition; for that was that which he principally intended? The Reason of it is this, that so from hence we might be perswaded, that the worst Afflictions that could be, they should not hurt us, but rather do us good, as proceeding from that love which God bears to Christ himself; and so this Expression here is to be taken, not only by way of Specification, as shewing us the nature of our condition it self, as Christians; but also by way of Mollification, as shewing us the love of God in disposing this condition to us, wherein we sympathize even with *Christ himself*. And that's the *second* Explication of this conformity, a conformity to Christ in *suffering*.

The *Third* and last, is a conformity in *Glory*; This is another kind of Correspondency which the Scripture does sometimes intimate and declare unto us, that we shall be changed into the same Image with Christ *from Glory to Glory*, *2 Cor. 3. 18.* *And as we have born the Image of the Earthly, so we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly*, *1 Cor. 15. 49.* It is said in *Job. 17. 22.* *The Glory which thou hast given me, I have given them.* Christ speaking not only of his Disciples, but also of all his Members. In *Col. 3. 4,* *When Christ who is our life shall appear, we also shall appear*

appear with him in Glory. And in 1 *Joh. 3. 2*, *We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him : for we shall see him as he is.* Like him in Soul, in the separation of it from the Body, as he told the penitent Thief upon the Cross, *This day thou shalt be with me in paradise*, in *Luk. 23. ver. 43.* And like him also in Body at the general Resurrection, *Philip. 3. 20, 21*, *From whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.*

This is grounded, first of all upon the foremention'd Union which Believers have with Christ ; as from thence they conform to him in his *Sufferings*, so also in his *Glory* : A Wife as she partakes with her Husband in his Losses, so also in his Gains ; and as in his Troubles, so also in his Contentments ; and the Members as when one suffers, all the rest suffer with it, so when one is honour'd, all the rest rejoyce with it : Christ and we are knit and united together as Husband and Wife, as Head and Members.

Secondly, We have the Praise of Christ to this purpose, *Ye which have been with me in my Temptations, ye shall be with me in my Kingdom*, *Luk. 22. 30.* And to him that overcometh, *I will grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne*, *Rev. 3. 21.*

Thirdly, We have for this also the Prayer of Christ, *Joh. 17. 24.* *Father, I will also that those whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am, that they may behold the Glory which thou hast given me.* As the Promise of Christ is most infallible, so the Prayer of Christ is most effectual ; and as Christ is sure to perform whatever he hath made tender of to us, so he is sure also to obtain whatever he hath requested for us. God the Father will hear his Son in all his Petitions ; *I know*, sayes he, *that thou hearest me alwayes*, *Joh. 11. 42.* And so in this Petition especially, amongst, and above all the rest.

The Use of this Point to our selves comes to this, First, as matter of comfort and satisfaction to us in all those Troubles and Afflictions which do at any time befall us, and our conformity to Christ in suffering. It may seem an harsh thing perhaps to us, that we should be made like to his Image in that ; that as he was afflicted, we should be afflicted too ; but for this purpose let us consider that we shall be like to his Image in this also, that if we suffer with him, we shall be also glorified together, as it is before in the Seventeenth Verse of this present Chapter. *If we dye with him, we shall also live with him ; and if we suffer with him, we shall also rejoyce with him*, *2 Tim. 2. 12.* We should look both upon Christ, and upon our selves, in both of these Correspondencies jointly.

Secondly, This may serve also to put a lustre and splendor upon the Saints and Servants of God in the midst of all those Disparagements and Contempts which are cast upon them, in regard of that mean condition which they sustain, sometimes here in the world, and from whence they are made conformable to the Image of Christ in Affliction : That they shall one day be fully beautified, and be made conformable to him also in glory ; and then those who now contemn them, shall be apt and ready to admire them, and to wonder at them.

Thirdly, We should also hence labour to be fitted for this glorious condition of conformity to Christ in Glory. Those that ever come to Heaven, they must be fitted and prepared for it, before they come thither; and so must we be for our particulars. Now this is especially by being made partakers of the first kind of conformity which I mention'd; and that is to his *Image in Holiness*; we must not be fashion'd like unto the world, but be made like unto him; and that in that qualification, that so we may be in this. And so now I have done also with the second general Part of this Verse, which is the *End* or *Term* which this Decree of God about his Children is carried unto; and that is a conformity of them to the Image of his Son, in Holiness, in Sufferings, and in Glory.

The Third and last, is the *Limitation* of this Conformity here mention'd, and that is in these words, *That he might be the first-born among many Brethren*. In which passage we have three Particulars distinctly considerable of us in the condition of the Saints: First, *Their Relation*, and that is, that they are Brethren. Secondly, *Their Number*; and that is, that they are many Brethren. Thirdly, *Their Order*; and that is, that they are younger Brethren: They are so, Brethren, as that Christ himself is the first-born amongst them.

First, To take notice of their *Relation*; the *Saints*, and such as are true Christians, they are all of them Brethren: This is one thing which is here implied, when I say that they are Brethren; I mean it, and the Apostle means it also in a double consideration: First, they are Brethren to Christ, they are his Brethren: And secondly, They are Brethren to one another; they are our Brethren, Brethren as to both.

First, Brethren to Christ; they are his Brethren, thus in Heb. 2. 11, 12, *For both he that sanctifieth, and they which are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren: Saying, I will declare thy Name among my brethren, &c.* So Job. 20. 17, *Go unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and unto your Father. And Matth. 25. 40, In as much as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren. In these places and the like, are all Believers thus express'd and denominated as Brethren to Christ.* And accordingly we may now take notice of them: This is that which may be made good unto us according to a threefold explication; there are three manner of ways, in which Christ and all true Christians may be said to be Brethren: First, as partaking of the same Nature: Secondly, as partaking of the same Father: Thirdly, as partaking of the same Spirit, &c.

First, As partaking of the same Nature, and that is in the business of Incarnation; though we did not take his Nature, which we could not do, yet he hath taken ours, and thereby hath made himself our Brother; He is now become bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, &c. According to that in Heb. 2. 14, *Forasmuch as the Children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same.* And in Heb. 2. 17. *Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren.* Christ and we are Brethren thus.

Secondly, As partaking of the same Father; we have both the same Original from whence we come, and whereunto we relate. He is begotten of
of

of God, and we are born of God; He is the Son of God by Nature, and we are the Sons of God by Grace; He is the Son of God by Eternal Generation, and we are the Sons of God by Spiritual Regeneration; He is the substantial and essential Son of God, and we are the Sons of God by Adoption.

Thirdly, As partaking of the same Spirit, and life, and conversation, whiles we are affected as he was affected, and walk as he walked, and do as he did; we are so far forth said to be his Brethren. And this is that which himself hath declared unto us, in *Matth. 12. 49, 50*, When one told him, that his Mother and Brethren stood without desiring to speak with him, it is said, that He stretched forth his hand toward his Disciples, and said, behold my Mother, and my Brethren: For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. Where we see how Christ counts of Relations, according to a suitableness of Affections.

This is much for the Honour and Dignity of the Servants of God, and may carry them above all that contempt which their condition here in the world is sometimes exposed unto; that they are of an high and noble Family, and are worthily and honourably related in this particular; yea, and moreover shall accordingly be owned, and vindicated and maintained upon all occasions. Brother, it is a word of Affection, as well as Relation; and so has still been improved upon all occasions: In Moses to his Brethren, in Joseph to his; and Christ will not be behind in his carriage towards his.

Therefore should Christians also accordingly carry in towards him in all holiness, and graciousness, and comeliness of conversation; that so Christ may not be ashamed to own them in so near a Relation as this is. And so much of the first sense, in which Christians are said to be Brethren, and that is to Christ.

Secondly, They are Brethren also, as being so one to another. And so the Scripture frequently stiles them in sundry places, as *1 Thess. 5. 26*, Greet all the Brethren, and Verse 27, Let this Epistle be read to all the holy brethren. And *1 Joh. 3. 16*, We ought to lay down our lives for the Brethren.

This they are said to be upon a various account: First, as of the same Profession, and of the same Heavenly Calling: Persons who are of the same Trade, and Myserie, and Corporation, they usually stile themselves Brethren. And so it is here, *Holy brethren, partakers of the Heavenly Calling*, *Heb. 3. 1*. One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are Brethren, *Matth. 23. 8*.

Secondly, Of the same Family and Household; the Family of Heaven, the Household of Faith, as the Patriarchs said of themselves, *We are all one mans Sons*, &c.

Thirdly, Having the same Inheritance allotted unto them; *If Children, then heirs, joint-heirs with Christ*, *Rom. 8. 17*. Therefore should Christians so carry themselves as Brethren one towards another, therefore love as brethren, *1 Pet. 3. 8*. and love the brother-hood, *1 Pet. 2. 17*. and let brotherly love continue, *Heb. 13. 1*. The thoughts of the Relation should very much inforce the Affection, and ingage to the exercising of it. As Abraham sometime to Lot, *Gen. 13. 8*, Let there be no strife I pray thee

thee betwixt me and thee, for we are brethren. That's the first thing here considerable, to wit, the *Saints Relation*; and that is, that they are *Brethren*. The second is their *Number*, they are *many*, among *many* Brethren: Indeed sometimes in Scripture they are said to be *few*, Matth. 7. 14, *Few shall find the way to heaven*. Matth. 20. 16, *Few are chosen*. Luk. 12. 32, *Christ's flock* is said to be a *little flock*, &c. But this is to be understood *comparatively* in reference to wicked persons, but absolutely and in themselves, *many*. And so the Scripture elsewhere expresses them, as Matth. 26. 28, *Christ shed his blood for many*. Rom. 5. 19, *By the obedience of one many were made righteous*. 1 Cor. 10. 17, *We being many are one bread*.

And it is that which is fitting to be so: First, for the performance of several Duties which are to be done by them; *Many hands make light work*, many several Christians, have many several abilities for several purposes, 1 Cor. 12. 19, 20, *If all were one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body*. The Body is one, but the Members of that one Body are many, for the discharge of many duties which are to be done by them.

Secondly, For the greater Honour and Glory of God; a Father that is able to provide Estates for many Children, and to bring many Sons unto Glory, as it is in Heb. 2. 10.

Thirdly, For the greater safety of the whole Family; there are many Adversaries; therefore there had need in some sort to be many Brethren for the incountring and resisting of them.

This, It first takes off from the prejudice of singularity which is sometimes cast upon Christians; as if they were no more but some few conceited persons; but soft, it is more than so; though Gods Children be not so many as men of the world, yet they are so many, as may justly wipe off such a censure as this is from them.

Secondly, It may likewise satisfy, as to the retiredness and closeness of Gods Servants: when it shall be thought, as *Elijah* sometimes thought, that *himself was alone*: No, it is not so, though Gods Servants may not always be *conspicuous*, yet for all that they may be *numerous*. What faith the answer of God to the Prophet, *I have reserv'd to my self seven thousand*, &c. Rom. 11. 4. That's the second thing here considerable: *Their Number, Many Brethren*.

The third and last particular is their Order; to wit, in reference to Christ; and that is, they are *Younger Brethren*, that he might be the *first-born amongst them*, and herein especially does consist the limitation of the Saints, for their conformity to *Christ's Image*: It is still with this Reservation, that he is the chief and principal. *Christ he is the first-born amongst many Brethren*, take notice of that: Thus he is frequently stiled in Scripture, as Col. 1. 15. *The first-born of every Creature*: and in Verse 18. of the same Chapter, *The beginning, and the first-born from the Dead*. So in Revel. 1. 5. *The first-begotten of the Dead*; and here now *the first-born amongst many Brethren*. He is call'd the first-born of every Creature, because he was before any Creature was made, being the Son of God from all eternity: He is call'd the first-born from the Dead, because he was the first-fruits of them that slept, in reference to the Resurrection: He is call'd the first-born amongst many Brethren, as being chief among the Children of God.

Now

Now here in this present Text which we have now before us, we are to take it as referring to all those particular Explications which we made before of the *Image of Christ*, whereunto the Children of God are said to be conformable; namely, in *Holiness*, in *Suffering*, and in *Glory*; Christ, he is the *first-born*; that is, the *Chief* in all of these.

First, In point of *Holiness*; he is the first-born in this Explication; and that in a twofold respect: First, In regard of *Capacity*, as he hath a greater measure of Holiness in himself, than any of his Brethren. Secondly, In regard of *conveyance*, as he is the Spring and Fountain, and Deriver of *Holiness* unto them.

First, In regard of *Capacity*, he has a greater measure of Holiness in himself, than any of his Brethren: thus *Psal. 45. 7. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; Therefore God even thy God hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladness above thy fellows. In him are all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, Col. 2. 3. He has holiness, and nothing but holiness in him; whereas the grace of others, it is at the best mixt with much defilement. He is holy, and barmless, and undefiled, and separate from sinners, Heb. 7. 26. No guile found in his Mouth, 1 Pet. 2. 22.*

Well, seeing this is the property and priviledge of Christ himself to be thus transcendently Holy, we may from hence take notice of the Insolency and Presumption of the *Man of Sin*, who takes this Title upon himself, to be call'd *His Holiness*: That which is the excellency of none but *Christ*, is assumed and claim'd by *Antichrist*, as if he in this sense were the first-born among many Brethren; whiles at sometimes hypocritically he styles himself the *Servant of Gods Servants*; he does at another time more heartily take upon him the name of *Christian primogeniture*; which how ill it becomes him, Experience it self does abundantly testifie. Thus is *Christ*, the *first-born as to Holiness*, in regard of *Capacity* as to what he has in himself.

Secondly, He is so also, in regard of Influence or conveyance, as what he is to us; as he is call'd the *first-born from the Dead*, because the *Dead* they do rise by vertue and power from him: So he is call'd the *first-born among the Saints*, because that sanctity and holiness which they have, they have it from his Spirit, imparting and communicating of it to them, *Of his fulness have we all received Grace for Grace, Joh. 1. 16. And Eph. 4. 7. Unto every one of us is given Grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ: which (by the way) teaches us both where to fetch it, and also where to acknowledge it; And that's the first part of the limitation of the Conformity of the Saints to Christ. They are like him, but so, as he hath the prebeminence; namely, in point of Holiness.*

Secondly, In point of *suffering*; it holds there also, that Christ hath the precedency and priority afore any other besides; This seems in a special manner to be here intended. It is true, sayes the Apostle here, that all the Children of God must be conformed to the Image of Christ in regard of *sufferings*; yet so, as that he *out-strips them*, and surpasses them all. So that from hence we may gather thus much: That the *sufferings of Christ*, they were greater than all the *sufferings* of any of the Saints or Servants of God besides; *His Visage was moved more then any mans, and his form then the Sons of men.* This may be made good untous, according to a three-fold Illustration.

First,

First, They were greater *Subjectivè*, in regard of the *Eminency* of the *Person* that did undergo them, as being no other than *the Son of God himself*, the Lord of *Glory*. As for us poor dust and ashes, which are *worms, and not men*; for us to suffer any thing which is grievous, it is no such great matter, it agrees very well with the state and condition in which we are; but for the *Son of God himself* to do so, to lay aside his *Glory*, and to veyle his *Majesty*, and to submit himself to a state of *Affliction*; for him, who (as the Apostle speaking it of him) was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be *equal with God*; for him to make himself of no *reputation*, and to take upon him the form of a *Servant*, and to be found in the likeness of *men*, and to humble himself, and to become obedient unto *Death*, even to the *Death of the Cross*. What a wonderful thing was this; he was the first-born in suffering, because he suffered in the *Eminency* of his *Person*.

Secondly, Those sufferings of Christ, they were greater, also *Extensivè*, in regard of the *things* which he suffered in, as to all kinds and particulars; not only in *his Body*, in all the parts and members thereof: But also in his *Soul*, as to all the powers and faculties thereof. He was *spit upon, and buffeted, and scourg'd, and nayl'd to the Cross*, besides that anguish of Spirit which he felt in himself, that no man ever did, whiles he made his soul an offering for sin, *Esay 53. 10, &c.*

Thirdly, Greater *Intensivè*, in regard of the *Exquisiteness* of the *pains and torments* themselves which he suffered, it is said, *It pleased the Lord to bruise him*, *Esay 53. 10.* and Verse 5. *He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.* His Soul was heavy unto death, which made him to sweat drops of blood. In *Matth. 26. 37, 38.* Yea, which was worst of all, he endured the wrath of his Father, when he cryed out in that lamentable manner; *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* There was never any poor Soul, which was under such a pang of *Divine desertion*, as our blessed Lord and Saviour was, when he hung upon the Cross for our *Redemption*, as having the *Vials of wrath* at that time poured forth upon him.

First, He suffer'd not only the Evils and Afflictions *themselves*, but also the curse of God with them, *Gal. 3. 13, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us.* As for the rest of the Children of God, it is true that they many times suffer very great evils and calamities; but the sting and venom of them is removed and taken away in Christ. He by suffering of the Cross *aforehand*, hath consequently sanctify'd it unto us, and so freed us from the malignity of it; yea, but now for Christ himself, he suffer'd with all the bitterness and grievousness of it, and with the greatest disadvantage that could be; he trod the Wine-press alone, and none of the people with him; yea, he drank of the Cup of the wrath of God without mixture.

Secondly, He had upon him the concurrence of all the Sins of all the *Eleſt* in the world; yea, indeed of all *mankind*, as to the price which he pay'd for them: The Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all; as it is in *Esay 53. 6.* Take the Sins of but one man alone, and they are heavy and burdensom enough, if they be duely weighed; David said of his own, that they were a burthen too heavy for him to bear, *Psal. 38. 4.* And what may we then think and conceive of the sins and impieties of the whole world taken together.

This

This (for the use of it) may first of all serve to raise us in our Apprehensions and Affections to Christ, by considering how much he hath not only done, but suffer'd for us : Let us not mitigate or extenuate his sufferings, as if they were *less* than indeed *they are*. No, but rather take notice of *them*, that so we may be answerably affected *with them*. Is it nothing to all you that pass by; behold and see, if there be any sorrow like unto his sorrow, Lam. 1. 12. And accordingly let it engage us so much the more in our love of him, and obedience to him.

And further secondly, let it work us to so much the more patience under our own Afflictions, and those calamities which are incident to our selves; we are apt when we fall into any trouble to be exceedingly disquieted, and out of frame; as thinking that there was never any that indured that which we do indure; but let us to this purpose look upon Christ, who is our elder Brother in this particular: and consider what he has suffer'd afore us, and suffer'd it so much the rather, that thereby he might the better qualify and moderate, and allay our sufferings to us. And that's also the second Reason of this Primogeniture of Christ, as to point of suffering.

The Third and last, is in point of Glory, Christ has the prebeminence here likewise. We are predestinated to be conform'd to the Image of the Son of God in this particular amongst the rest; but yet still so as we must give him leave to go before us, and to have the precedency of us; upon which account he is call'd not only the Author, but also the Captain of their Salvation, in Heb. 2. 10. As leading them, and shewing them first the way to it in his own person. There's a twofold Honour and Glory; wherein Christ hath the Prebeminence of the Saints. First, Of Dignity, and Power, and Office here in this life. Secondly, Of Bliss and Happiness in the life to come.

First, Christ as the Head of the Church, hath the prebeminence of Dignity and Power, and of all here in this life. The first-born in ancient time had the precedency in this particular. The excellency of Dignity, and the excellency of Power, as it is in Gen. 49. 3. They were Princes and Priests in their Families. Even so also is Christ in His; he is the great King of his Church, who rules it by his spirit and word; He gathers his elect and chosen, and he scatters and subdues his Enemies; and he is the great High Priest of his Church, who offer'd himself up in Sacrifice for it; and he is the Prophet of his Church also to instruct it, and to reveal the will of his Father to it; he was anointed and sealed by God the Father to all those several Offices in his Church, and to the excellency and prebeminence of them; so that all others whatsoever besides in each kind of them; they are but inferiour and subordinate to him, and dependant upon him: He is therefore said to be the first-born, that so in all things he might have the prebeminence: And in particular, in all those things which I have now mention'd of Dignity, and Power, and Office here in the world.

Secondly, For the life to come; Christ he hath the prebeminence of the Saints here also, being the great Heir of Eternal Glory. It is true (as I shewed before) they are made conformable to his Image in Glory; but it is to the Truth of his Image not to the Transcendency, they are partakers with him of the same Glory in kind; but not of the same Glory in Degree. As they are partakers of the same Holiness, but not of the same measure of Holiness, which he did partake of, who received the Spirit
without

without measure : The *first-born* was wont in times past to have a *double portion* assign'd unto him, because he was the *Beginning of strength*, Deut. 21. 17. And so has *Christ* a double *portion of Honour and Glory* bestowed upon him ; as being the *first-born amongst many Brethren*.

Therefore accordingly it should teach us to give all Honour and Glory unto him, as standing in this relation to us, and we to him, as Members under this Head, as Subjects under this Lord, as Younger-brethren under this first-born. We should to this purpose learn to know both his place, and our own, and accordingly be observient of it. We should take heed either of arrogating to our selves, or else of attributing to others that Honour, and Dignity, and Glory which belongs only to Christ, as his Prerogative. This is that which we see done in Popery, as in regard of the Pope himself, who not only like the Beast, would have an horn like to the Lamb, and so be equal to him ; but also exalts himself above every thing which is called God ; so also in that Honour which is given to Angels and Saints departed, and especially to the Virgin Mary, who sometimes is prefer'd and advanc'd even above Christ himself. This is very unsuitable and opposite to this Doctrine, which we have now before us, concerning Christ's Primogeniture, as in every thing else besides ; so amongst the rest in regard of that Honour and Glory which is due unto him, which is therefore to be fasten'd upon him ; according to that charge which was given even to the Angels themselves in this particular, when he bringeth the first-begotten into the world, he saith, *And let all the Angels of God worship him*, Heb. 1. 6.

And so now I have done also with the Third general part of this Verse, which is the bounding or limitation of our Conformity to the Image of Christ ; *That he might be the first-born, &c.* And so much also may suffice of Gods Purpose and Decree it self : Now there follows the Execution of this Decree in the next Verse ; *But, &c.*

S E R M O N



S E R M O N XXXV.

R O M. 8. 30.

Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

There are two special places of Scripture (among many others besides) which I have oftentimes thought with my self are more worth then all the world, and which in the full improvement of them, will evidence the Children of God to be the happiest people in the world. The one is that of the Psalmist, in Psal. 84. 11. The Lord God is a Son and Shield; the Lord will give Grace and Glory, no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. And the other is this of the Apostle in the 28th verse of this Chapter, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose. Joyn but these two together, and lay but these two for a ground: First, That God will withhold nothing that is good from us; And then that God will order and dispose of all things for good to us. And what can be then wanting to our absolute and compleat happiness, especially when such truths as these are, are not barely mentioned and propounded, but also as they are here sealed and confirmed by the experience of the persons themselves which have mention'd them to us. Our business at this present time is with the latter of those Scriptures mention'd concerning the co-operation of all things to the greatest good of God's Servants. This the Apostle Paul had laid down as an Argument to perswade the Romans, and in them all other Christians to an holy patience under Afflictions. Now this he draws from the final execution of God's Decree and eternal Purpose concerning his people, which is to carry them from Predestination to Vocation; from Vocation to Justification; from Justification to Glory, according as it is here exhibited to us; Moreover whom, &c. which, as we may call it, is the Golden Chain of Mans Salvation.

IN the handling of this present verse which we have now before us, we shall take the several rings and links of *this Chain* asunder, and take a particular notice of them. They are considerable under a three-fold Division or Gradation: First, Of *effectual vocation*; Whom he hath predestinated, them he hath also called. Secondly, Of *concomitant*

SSS tant

tant justification; Whom he hath called, them he hath also justified. Thirdly, Of consequent salvation; Whom he hath justified, them he hath also glorified.

We begin with the first of these parts, and that *is our effectual vocation*, as the effect of our Predestination; *Whom he hath predestinated, them he hath also called.* As for our effectual Calling, consider'd simply in it self: I have spoken of it (as you may remember) at large out of the 28. verse of this Chapter, where we met with this expression, *Of the called according to his purpose*, which I explain'd and lay'd open to you in the nature of it, in the author of it, in the subject of it, and in the manner of it &c. That which is to be handled by us concerning it chiefly and especially is the order of it which it holds to predestination, and the purpose and decree of God about such and such particular persons, where we have two main points observable of us: First, That all who are elected, they are in due time effectually called. Secondly, That all who are effectually called, they have been from all eternity elected and pre-ordin'd to eternal salvation.

First, I say, All which are elected, they are in due time effectually called. This is the next and immediate Proposition, which lies here before us in these words, and it is confirm'd from other places of Scripture, as in Act. 13. 48. *As many as were ordained to eternal life believed:* Where believing is made a proper consequent and effect of Predestination. So 2 Thess. 2. 13, 14. *God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth, whereunto he called you by our Gospel to the obtaining of the Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.* Where sanctification, and belief of the truth, and effectual vocation, are made to be the means whereby God's Decree of Election is accomplish'd and put into execution. So again, in 1 Pet. 1. 2, *Election according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto Obedience, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* So John 6. 37. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me.* That he giveth me, that is, that he hath purposed and decreed to be Members of me, and to be saved by me. They shall come to me, that is, they shall hearken to my Call, and by a lively Faith joyn themselves with me. All that he giveth me in predestination, they shall come to me in Effectual vocation.

This must needs be so, as it is here declared upon a two-fold account:

First, From that reason which is in Nature, *Ab extremo ad extremum non pervenitur nisi per medium*; We come not from one end to another, but only by means. He that is intended for such a Place or Journey-end whereunto he should come, he must walk in that way and path which leads to that end, or else he will never reach or attain unto it. He who is appointed to life, he must partake of those means which tend to the sustaining and preserving of life; he must eat and drink, and exercise, and such things as those; even so is it also in reference to eternal life. He that ever comes to that, he must partake of all those means which tend thereunto; whereof this before us is the chief, namely, to be effectually called and converted, and brought home to Christ: Hence the Apostle writing to the Colossians, *Gives thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in light.* Those who are partakers of Glory, they are made meet to be partakers of it before they partake of it. Take men as they come into the world,
and

and as consider'd in *their natural estate*, and there's no proportion or suitability at all in them to such a glorious condition: Corruption cannot inherit incorruption, neither can flesh and blood (in this sense) inherit the Kingdom of God. There must be a change, and this is that which is wrought in conversion and effectual vocation.

Secondly, *Effectual Calling* is a proper and necessary consequent, and effect of Election, not only as a means to Glorification, but also as an end to Predestination, and to Election it self. Forasmuch as God has appointed us to the one as well as to the other. God hath not more chosen us to Salvation, then he hath chosen us to Sanctification; nor he hath not more ordained us to Glory, then he hath ordained us to Grace: He hath chosen us that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love, Ephes. 1. 4. We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them, Ephes. 2. 10. Mark, He has ordained us to good works, to walk in them. Now that which is a main end and scope of Gods Decree, the same must needs be an effect and consequent of it; because the Purpose and Decree of God is infallible, and such as alwayes hath its effect. Effectual calling, it is the end of Election, therefore it must needs be also the result of it.

But here it may be by the way demanded, what shall we say in this case to Infants, and such Children as die before they come to years of discretion; whether are such as these now within the compass of Predestination, whiles they are not within the compass of Conversion and effectual Vocation?

To this I answer thus much, That such as these they are also (in their kind) effectually called as well as grown persons, though not in that way, and after that manner as the others are. The ordinary way of Calling and Conversion, is the preaching and ministry of the Word; Faith comes by hearing, as it is in Rom. 10. 17. Now Infants (it is true) are such as in that condition are uncapable of this Ordinance, and the efficacy of it, but yet for all that they are not altogether destitute of Conversion, as being in an extraordinary manner knit and united to Christ by the Holy Ghost, and having his Spirit working effectually in them.

The Use of this Point to our selves comes to this: First, As an excitement to us to imbrace the means of our Calling and Conversion, in the preaching and ministry of the Word, that so we may have a comfortable testimony in our Consciences concerning our election and ordination to eternal life. There are a great many of people in the world that think they shall go to Heaven, and be saved, though they live as they list, and though they had never any gracious work of God's Spirit wrought in their hearts, as tending and conducing thereunto. They hope that God has elected them, and chosen them as well as others; and so that therefore they must needs be saved upon the account of Gods Decree, howsoever they carry themselves. But such persons as these are, they do exceedingly mistake the matter, and deceive themselves in this particular; No, Whomsoever God has predestinated, them also he has called, as it is here exprest; that is, he hath made them to accept and to imbrace the invitations of the Gospel, and to take the Lord Jesus for theirs upon those terms and conditions wherein he is offer'd and tender'd to them in it. Those that have not done this, they cannot as yet conclude themselves to be in the number of God's elected.

Sff 2

There

Therefore as we desire the comfortable evidence of that to our selves; Let us be careful to look to *this*, we see how the Apostle *Peter*, in 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. puts these two both together, to wit, *Calling and Election*; Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and your election sure. And he puts *Calling* first before *Election*, not as that which is first in the nature of the thing it self, but as that which is first in the discovery, and appearance and manifestation of it to us. *Election* is first in the thing it self, as being the Act of God Himself, which he hath of his own free Grace past upon us from all eternity. But *Calling* is first of all in the discovery, as the certain effect and consequent of this our Election. We know that we are chosen and elected, because we find and feel that we are called; as the cause is known by the effect. And so the Apostle *Paul* seems to carry it in another place, as concerning the Election of others, as in 1 *Thess.* 1. 4, 5. Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God: For our Gospel came not to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, &c. From hence it was that the Apostle did conclude upon the *Thessalonians* election, because he did observe their effectual Vocation and Conversion in the success of his Ministry. And as thus men are to judge of others, so also in the like case of themselves; and accordingly are they to be perswaded to mind the means of their Calling in the Ordinances and Providences and tenders and dispensations of Grace, which are offered unto them. Do not slight them, do not neglect them, do not defer them, do not put them off; Where there is a season and opportunity for the imbracing and entertaining of them. Every Sermon you hear in the preaching and ministry of the Word, and every providence you see and take notice of either to your selves or others; It is a Call, if ye would be call'd by it; and therefore do not neglect it, or disregard it, or pass it by, especially considering the uncertainty of these opportunities, but be careful still to make a gracious and profitable Use of it for your greatest spiritual advantage.

A second Use of the Point may be this, Seeing all whom God hath predestinated, them he hath also called: We see then that mans conversion is not at last to be resolv'd into himself, but into the free Grace of God alone. These words, Whom he hath predestinated, &c. they are to be taken not only by way of Order and Concomitancy, but also by way of Influence and Causality; not only as shewing the consequence of the one to the other, but also as shewing the dependance of the one upon the other, and the derivation of the one from the other: Predestination is not only the antecedent, but also the cause of effectual vocation. And the same Grace and good pleasure of God that ordains us to eternal life, it makes us also to imbrace the means which tend to this life.

And here now there are two particulars which are pertinently considerable of us:

First, That it is not in our own power to convert our selves, but herein we are wholly dependant upon the Grace of God.

Secondly, That it is not in our power to hinder our Conversion neither, where God will effectually work it, and does intend to bring it to pass.

First, I say, Effectual Vocation and Conversion is not in our own power, but we are herein wholly dependant upon the free Grace of God. We are

are not call'd, because we *will* and have a mind our selves to be call'd, but because God is pleas'd to call us, and hath purposed so to do from all eternity; *We are the called according to his purpose*, as it is verse 28th of this Chapter. And so Rom. 9. 11. *That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, &c.* And so verse 16. of the same Chapter, *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, &c.* Look, as it is God that *invites us*, and that *calls us* in the Ministry of the Word; so it is God also that *inclines us*, and perswades us to *hearken* to this Call in the entertaining of it; and except he did wonderfully over-power us, of our selves, we should never do it: *Without me ye can do nothing*, sayes Christ, John 15. 5. *And we are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves, our sufficiency is of God*, 2 Cor. 3. 5. It is not in our own power to call or convert our selves; That's the first thing here observable.

Secondly, We have this here also, That it is not in our own power to hinder our own Conversion neither, where God is minded and purposed to effect it; *Those who are predestinated, they are called*; that is, they are called efficaciously, and infallibly, and against all opposition: *The Grace of Conversion it is such as cannot be resisted*. This is another deduction which does follow from this passage here before us; that those whom God hath appointed to Salvation, they shall at one time or other most assuredly come thereunto: *Every one that hath heard and learned of the Father comes to me*, sayes Christ, in John 6. 45.

For the explication of this a little unto us, when we say, *That converting Grace is irresistible*.

First, We do not deny but that there is a *disposition* in the soul of a Sinner to make resistance hereunto. There is in the *heart* of a person unconverted in the very act and moment of his Conversion, a corrupt propensity and inclination for the *resisting of converting Grace*.

Secondly, We do not deny neither, but that there is also more or less some *actual resistance*; the *heart* of a *natural man*, when the Grace of God begins to work upon him, it hath abundance of conflicts, and fightings, and bickerings many times in him, as loth to come off, and to yield obedience to the *Word of Christ*. This we readily yield and acknowledge.

But this is that which we say, That *this resistance* which a Sinner makes in Conversion, it is not such as conquers, and overcomes, and prevails above the Grace of God thus dealing with him. The Spirit of God in Conversion, where he is pleas'd and purposed to work it, is sure still to *have the better*, and to overcome the most obstinate Sinner that is in the world: *He works both the will and the deed, according to his good pleasure*, as it is in Phil. 2. 13. And this truth which we now propound and declare, it is such as follows from this present Text which we have here in hand. For if it were in the *power of mans will* still to hold off, and to choose whether or no he would be converted, even then when God had wrought all things that make for his Conversion, it were then also in his power to *frustrate Gods Decree*; and this should not be a truth which we have here exhibited to us, That *whom he hath predestinated, them he hath also called*. And this may be the second Use or Improvement which we make of this Point.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Seeing those who are *elect*, they shall at one time or other be called; we see then how that such as those are not to be excluded by us from the means of *Conversion*, whom we cannot conclude to be out of the compass of predestination: We are to preach the Gospel, not only to such persons as are already converted, or *fair and ingenuous*, but also to those who for the present are *refractory*, and in an opposite and contrary way, that so herein we may comply with *Gods secret Purposes and Decrees* upon them. This is a good *incouragement* to *Ministers* to go on in their work; even there where they do not, it may be alwayes observe a present fruit and success of it: For if those whom they deal withall be such as are the Subjects of Election (which they cannot deny or contradict as unknown unto them) they shall at one time or other be also the Subjects of Conversion, and as the Apostle speaks of the *Jews*; The election shall obtain, even there where the rest are hardened, *Rom. 11.7.* Let others be what they will be, God takes care of the *Vessels of mercy*, as prepared for Glory.

And so it is a good *incouragement* also to people to attend upon the means, and to do all that lies in their power, as leading to the success of them, as not knowing but that herein they shall comply with God's own Purposes concerning them, which are sure to take effect. And so as for strengthening and confirming Grace likewise, that he that hath begun a good work will finish it.

Lastly, We see here a reason for *Gods deferring* of the Day of Judgment, and not as yet putting an end to the World: It is upon this ground and consideration, That those who are predestinated, may be called. Forasmuch as there are divers persons whom God hath made choice of, and fore-ordain'd to eternal life; who either as yet are not born, or if born, are not as yet converted, which it concerns them to be, and must be; therefore does God protract the World as an opportunity for their Birth and Conversion, and the accomplishing of the number of his *Elect*. And this is plainly and undoubtedly the meaning of that place of Scripture which hath undergone so much discussion and agitation, in *2 Pet. 3. 9.* where it is said, That the Lord is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; namely, of such persons whom in his eternal Purpose and Decree he had exempted from perishing, and accordingly in order thereto had resolv'd should repent, and so likewise be saved.

Therefore, as in one respect, the Day of Judgment is hasten'd for the Elects sake, to shorten their Affliction; so in another respect it is also slacken'd for the Elects sake, to further their Salvation. To further their Salvation, namely, by occasioning their Conversion, which they have now by this delay, time and opportunity given unto them, for the effecting of it in them. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the first Point here propounded to be consider'd; and that is, that all who are *elect*, they are in due time effectually called.

The second is this, That all who are effectually called, they have been from all eternity *elect*; As those whom he hath predestinated, he hath call'd; so he hath call'd none besides: Therefore these words are to be taken not only *Emphatick*, but *Exclusivè*. The *Elect*, and none but they, are the Subjects of *effectual Vocation*: Hence we find it to be call'd, *The faith of Gods Elect*,

Elect, Tit. 1. 1. as that which is peculiar to them. Thus Matth. 13. 11: To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to them it is not given. And Matth. 11. 25, 26. Thou hast hid those things from the wise and prudent, and hast reveal'd them unto Babes; even so our Father, because it seemed good in thy sight.

This must needs be so in regard of the immediate dependance of effectual vocation upon Election, as of the effect upon the cause. Forasmuch as calling is a fruit of election, and has that for the first ground and foundation of it, it does necessarily presuppose Election in those who are the Subjects of it, and are thus actually called.

This it serves to give us an account of the different effect of the Word of God, and means of Salvation in different persons; we see here, why in the same Auditory, at the same Sermon, under the same Ministry, in the same visible Church, some should be converted, and others should not be converted, as it is said of St. Paul's hearers at Athens, some believed, and some believed not; as the next and immediate reason is the different vouchsafing or withdrawing of God's co-operating and assisting Grace: So the first and remote reason is the different Purpose and Decree of God in predestination, according to that hint in the place formerly alledg'd, Act. 13. 48, *As many as were ordain'd to eternal life believed.* This is the Ultimate difference whereunto all is at last to be resolv'd.

Again, this makes with the Doctrine of Pelagians, and such as those who teach that men are first called, and chosen afterwards: That God foreseeing men to believe, and repent, and to persevere in Grace, he does then and from thence pass a Decree of saving them, and of bringing them to eternal life. This is opposite to this present Truth and Text which we have here before us, where it is not said, That whom he called, he did predestinate; But whom he predestinated, them he called.

Lastly, Here's a good ground from whence any persons may conclude themselves to be Heirs of eternal Salvation, and Vessels of Election; namely, so far forth as they find in themselves the fruits of effectual calling; where there's the one, there's undoubtedly the other. And where's the latter, there's undoubtedly the former, because the latter cannot be without the former: Look as none can conclude themselves to be elected, which are not effectually call'd; which was that which was urged by us in the former Proposition; so all may conclude themselves to be elected which are effectually called, which is that which is offer'd to us, and implied here in this, in as much as effectual vocation is the consequent of Election.

Therefore as I have formerly hinted and suggested in this particular: Let none trouble themselves any further about Gods Decrees, and Purposes, and Intentions, which are things in their own nature very secret, and mysterious, and infinitely beyond our reach and comprehension. But rather reflect upon themselves, and their own hearts and lives; not so much upon the work of the Father in Election, as upon the work of the Spirit in Sanctification, which is that which is nearest to us, and so best discover'd by us. This is that which we may lay for a ground, and take for certain; and go away with it; that where-ever there is Faith, and Repentance, and new Obedience; the work of Regeneration, and the New Creature, wrought

wrought in the heart, with a life answerable and suitable to it; there is a person set apart and design'd to eternal Salvation, there is one whose Name is assuredly written in Heaven, and enrol'd in the Book of life. And so now I have done with the first link of this golden Chain of Salvation in effectual vocation, out of these words, *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called.*

The second ring or link of this Chain is in our concomitant *Justification*, in these words, *And whom he called, them he also justified.* The word *Justification* here in this place, as also in other places of Scripture, is to be taken in a *judiciary* signification; not for the making of one just, which is all one as to *sanctifie*, but for the declaring of one to be just, and absolving him and freeing him from condemnation: So that by *justified*, we are to understand such persons as are acquitted and taken for righteous in the sight of God, which is that which is here pronounced of such as are truly and effectually called. Those who have taken and embraced Christ by Faith in the Ministry of the Gospel, they are absolved from the guilt of their sins, and have his Righteousness imputed unto them: This is the Point which we have here before us, and it is that which is agreeable to divers other places besides, as *Act. 26. 18.* The Apostle Paul there gives this account of his Ministry, in the scope and in the efficacy of it, *That it was to open mens eyes, to turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the power of Satan to God; That was effectually to call them, and to convert them to Christ.* Now he adds further hereunto, *That they might receive forgiveness of sins, &c.* that was (as it is here exprest) to justify them, and to absolve them, and free them from guilt. But the latter is here joyn'd with the former, as pertinent and concomitant to it. So *Act. 13. 39.* Every one that believeth is justified, and that from all things, &c.

The ground hereof is this, Because all which are effectually called, they have taken Christ upon his own terms, and thereby are become members of him; and the Lord looks upon them accordingly as ingrafted and set into Christ, and as one with him. Christ he hath paid their debts for them, and hath clothed them with his own Righteousness; so that now as He is accepted, so they are accepted likewise for his sake: God first of all justifies Christ, and then he justifies those which are Christs, and which do belong unto him. Therefore it is said in *Ephes. 1. 6, 7,* *That he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his Grace.* And so in *Rom. 8. 1,* *There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.* Where ingrafture into Christ, which is accompanied with an holy conversation; as the fruit of effectual calling is made a condition of Justification, and absolution and freedom from guilt and condemnation.

When it is said here in this Text, *Whom he hath called, he hath justified.* We are not to take it so, as if *Justification* were founded in any thing in us, as coming from our selves, but meerly in reference to Christ, and as looking and reflecting upon Him. Forasmuch as every one that is effectually called does savingly believe; and every one that does truly believe, does lay hold upon Christ; and every one that does lay hold upon Christ, has his sin pardon'd to him, and Christ's Righteousness fasten'd upon

upon him. Therefore every one that is call'd is justified; here's the ground of this Concomitancy and Conjunction.

This, it makes very much for the comfort of all true Believers, and such persons as are willing to take Christ upon his own conditions and terms whereupon he is offered unto them; what greater blessing are they indeed capable of then this is, which we have now before us? Blessed is the man whose Transgression is forgiven, and whose Sin is covered: Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose Spirit there is no guile, as it is exprest first by the Psalmist, Psal. 32. 1. and confirm'd again by the Apostle, Rom. 4. 7. Why this now is the blessedness of every true Christian and Believer, he is one who is in such a condition as this is.

Whiles it is said here, That those who are called are justified; here a question may be demanded, whether a man in his effectual Calling hath all his sins pardoned and forgiven to him at once, past, present, and to come; because it is said here, *That he is freed from condemnation?*

To this I answer, That in the justification of a Sinner, which is the concomitant of his effectual calling, all his sins are forgiven to him virtually, but actually they are not forgiven, while he does repent, and sue out his pardon. Therefore even justified persons they do after the justification of their persons, pray to God, and have cause still to pray for the forgiveness of their sins unto them; not only as to the continuance of forgiveness, as some interpret it; nor yet only as to the assurance of this forgiveness, as others gloss upon it. But also as to the renewall of forgiveness, as there is still a new occasion given for it: Look how often we sin, so often do we need the pardon and forgiving of sin unto us, which though we have a general right unto from the justification of our persons in general, which can neither be augmented nor diminished; yet we have not a particular injoyment of, but upon a particular and renewed application of the blood of Christ unto us, which is done by God upon a particular application of our selves unto him for such forgiveness. And so I have done also with the second Ring or Link of this Chain, as it is considerable in a Christians justification; And whom he called, them he also justified.

The third and last is of consequent Salvation, in these words, And whom he justified, them he also glorified. Some under this term of Glorification would have Sanctification included, because otherwise they think there is a great defect in this Chain of Salvation, which Sanctification is a special part of, and appurtenant unto. But this I rather conceive to be couched in effectual calling, and therefore take the word in its proper and peculiar signification, for the bestowing of eternal happiness and salvation it self. All whom God justifies and sanctifies here in this life, he will be sure to glorifie in another. Thus Job. 5. 24. He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. So Job. 10. 27. My sheep hear my voice, and I give unto them eternal life.

This must needs be so: First, From that which is premised in the verse immediately before, wherein it is said, *That we are predestinated to be conform'd to the Image of Christ.* One part of which Image I there shewed

was his *Image of Glory*: Those who are like to *Christ* shall be so as *He is*.

Secondly, From the dependance of Justification upon Election. Who-soever are elected, shall be glorified; who-soever are justified, they are elected: Therefore who-soever are justified, shall be glorified.

Thirdly, From the immediate connexion betwixt the means and the end. Justification is a means tending to Salvation; *Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath*, sayes the Apostle, *Rom. 5. 9*. Therefore those that partake of the one must also of the other. Where-soever God absolves any person from guilt and condemnation, he does cloth them with *Happiness and Glory*.

The main Use of this Point to our selves, is that which is the main scope and intent of this Text which we have here in hand, which is to comfort us against the Afflictions and Troubles which we meet withall here in this life, and that especially in two particulars: First, That they shall not hinder our Salvation. And secondly, That they shall rather promote it.

First, I say, Those Afflictions and Troubles which in this world we are subject unto, they shall not hinder our Salvation, or prove any thing prejudicial to it. For whiles we are predestinated to glory, and eternal happiness, as it appears here that we are, therefore nothing shall be able at any time to come between *us* and *it*. Then Afflictions would be sad things indeed, if so be that they could keep us from Heaven; but this they cannot do, in the greatest violence and extremity of them: Being elected, and called, and justified, we shall be glorified out of all question. And there's a great deal of *secret comfort and consolation* which is involv'd in this.

But secondly, As Afflictions shall *not hinder* our Salvation, so moreover they shall *further and promote it*; forasmuch as by them we are *in the sanctifying of them* to us, purged and purified from that corruption which is in us, and so made meet for the Kingdom of Heaven, as also we are thereby made conformable to the *Image of Christ*, and so from thence also *interested and concern'd* in the same estate and place where he is. And thus much of the several Rings and Links of this Golden Chain of Salvation, as they are considerable of us particularly and distinctly.

Now for a close and conclusion of all, there is somewhat farther which is here observable of us, from these words consider'd at large, and in general:

First, We see here that Election it is not *universal* and common to all, but limited, and determin'd, and confin'd to a *certain number* of persons. This is clear from the Text upon this consideration, in that God's Election and Predestination it is necessarily and infallibly followed with *other Acts* in the execution of it, as with *Calling and Justifying*, &c. But now all persons whatsoever indefinitely, and indifferently, and without distinction are not the subjects of these; Therefore neither are the subjects of *that*. All are *not called*, and all are *not sanctified*, and all are *not justified*; and therefore accordingly are *not elected*: Hence the Scripture tells us in *Matth. 22. 14*, *That many are called, but few are chosen*. Mark, *but few are chosen*; where, by the way, we may take notice for the *right understanding* of that place, that when our

Saviour

Saviour distinguishes the *Called* from the *Elected*, and makes *that* to be larger then *this*; he does not there understand it of a special and effectual calling, but of a common and general calling. If we speak of effectual calling, so there are as many chosen as there are called, according to this Text which we have here in hand; *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called*. But if we speak only of an outward and common call, which is only exhibited in the Ministry of the Word, and the tender of the means; so there are more call'd then are chosen. Predestination is limited and confined to a certain number of persons. Therefore we read in Scripture of *two* sorts of Vessels which are prepared; *Of Wrath, and of Mercy*.

And this serves to meet with the *contrary Opinion* of some persons; who teach, that upon such and such conditions, of *Faith, and Perseverance, &c.* God does elect and make *choice of all*, when as God yet knows that such and such persons will never come up to those conditions, as having purposed in Himself not to *bestow such conditions as these upon them*; and without his bestowing of them *upon them*, they could never reach or attain unto them. And no man does ever make *that* to be the condition of his Action, which condition he knows will never be.

Secondly, we have here also the Doctrine of *final Perseverance*; That God's Children they cannot *fall from Grace*, or be excluded from the *kingdome of Heaven*. This Point is very clear in this Scripture, and grounded upon *sundry Considerations*:

First, Upon the *immutability and unchangeableness* of God's Affection; *Whom he did fore-know, he did predestinate*. Those whom he did love from everlasting, He will love to it.

Secondly, From the *certainty and infallibility* of Gods Decree; *Whom he did predestinate*, that is, *fore-ordained* to eternal Salvation, them at last he *glorified*.

Thirdly, Upon the *indissoluble Connexion and Conjunction* of the means with the end. These *Rings and Links* in this Golden Chain here before us are so involved one in the other, as that they cannot be possibly disjoyn'd or sever'd one from the other; seeing those who were *elected* shall be *glorified*: Those who are *justified* shall be sure to be so too, because those who are *justified* they are *elected*. God Himself cannot be deceived, nor his purpose cannot be intercepted, nor his calling cannot be revoked. And therefore his people cannot be snatcht or pull'd away from him: *No man shall be able to take them out of his hands, who is greater then all, Job. 10. 29.*

Which on the one hand serves to confute the contrary Doctrine, and on the other hand serves very much for the great *stay and comfort*, and support of God's *Servants themselves*.

Thirdly and lastly, Observe thus much, That all the *whole work* of our Salvation from top to bottom, and from the beginning of it to the end, and from first to last, it belongs wholly to God, and proceeds from the abundant riches of his *mercy*, and favour towards us. It is He that hath *fore-known*, and it is He that hath *predestinated*, and it is He that hath *called*, and it is He that hath *justified*, and so it is He only that hath *glorified*: It is He alone who is *all in all*.

This it first of all excludes all boasting and presumption of *our selves*, or of any thing *in us*; What *hast thou*, that thou hast not *received*? And if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? *1 Cor. 4. 7.*

Secondly, It may serve to *inlarge our hearts* so much the more in all *praise and acknowledgment*, and *thanksgiving to God*, and may teach us to cry out in this case with this very Apostle in another Scripture, which is *Rom. 11. 36, Seeing of him, and through him, and to him are all things; To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* So much for *that*, and so I have now done with the thirtieth verse also of this Chapter, and so likewise with this whole Paragraph and Portion of Scripture, *Moreover, whom he did predestinate, &c.*

SERMON



S E R M O N XXXVI.

R O M. 8. 31.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

These latter times of the world are times of Enmity and Hostility; of Wars, and of Rumors of Wars; wherein Nation is engaged against Nation, People against People, and several persons one against another. And therefore it is matter of concernment to have somewhat to sustain us in these conditions, and to arm us against them. A potent Abettor is a great encouragement against a potent Adversary. And this is that which we have here in this Text and Scripture which we have now before us, and which therefore I have now made choice of at this present time, both as pertinent to the condition of the season, as also to the nature of the Argument, which hath lately been handled by us in the close and conclusion of this Chapter, concerning the triumph of a Believer over all Enemies and Opposites whatsoever. And truly had I thought of it at first, I should indeed have begun with it: But rather then wholly to omit it, I am willing to take it in this order in which now I propound it.

IN the Text it self there are two general Parts considerable: First, An *Introductory Preface*. Secondly, A *Peremptory Expostulation*. The *Preface*, that is in these words, *What shall we then say to these things?* The *Expostulation*, that is in these words, *If God be for us, who can be against us.*

We begin with the first of these parts, viz. The *Preface*; *What shall we then say to these things?* To these things, that is, to these Truths and Doctrines which we have now delivered unto you, and which we are further to deliver. The *Apostle* does here very pertinently reflect upon them, and that to very good purpose:

First, In a way of *Confirmation*, he does hereby strengthen both himself and the *Romans* in the belief of them; As if he had said, *We have now heard them, what have we to say against them? can we object any thing to the contrary?* They are things out of question. This is a good course to be taken by *Christians*, to labour to settle themselves in those truths which are delivered to them.

Secondly,

Secondly, In a way of *Consolation*; *What shall we say to these things?* that is, Oh what a great deal of *benefit and comfort* does there arise to us from them! The Apostles heart was very much affected and taken with them; this is another thing which we should also endeavour after in our coming to the *Word*, namely, to have answerable Affections to the Doctrines which are exhibited to us, and have some *relish and savour of them*; not only to hear them, and know them, and in some manner to be persuaded of the truth which is contain'd in them, but to *close and comply with them*.

Thirdly, In a way of *practical Improvement*; *What shall we say to these things?* that is, what indeed shall we do proportionable to them? How does it become us to live, that are made partakers of such precious Truths and Mysteries as these are. This is the scope and drift of these words.

The sum of all comes to this, To teach us seriously and frequently to meditate upon the Word of God in the Ministry of it, and thereby to bring it home unto our hearts; as we have it in *Heb. 2. 1*, *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we let them slip*; Or run out as *leaking Vessels*. There are many people in the world, that oftentimes come to such performances as these are, wherein the *Doctrines and Truths of Religion* are laid before them, but they never *think* of them, but then when they are *hearing of them*; what goes in at *one Ear*, it goes out commonly at *another*, which is the reason that they do no more profit and benefit by it: Whereas now we should, as it were, *chew the cud*, and go over those things in our thoughts and contemplations, and private discourses which have been hinted and suggested to us in the *publick Ministry*. But so much may serve briefly for that, which is the *first general part* of the Text, to wit, *Introductory Preface*, in these words, *What shall we then say to these things?*

The second is the *peremptory Expostulation*; *If God be for us who can be against us?* Wherein again we have *two branches* more: First, The *Supposition*. Secondly, The *Inference*. The *Supposition*, *If God be for us*. The *Inference*, *Who can be against us?*

First, Here's the *Supposition*, *If God be for us*: This if it is not an if of *doubting or ambiguity*, but rather of *certainty and assurance*; *Si* is as much as *cum*, and *if* is as much as *seeing that*; And so there is this in it, That God is indeed for all true *Christians and Believers*. This is here *supposed and premised*, and taken for granted, as a truth which cannot be denied. He was for the Apostle Paul and the believing Romans, and so is likewise for all others who are of the same spirit and temper with them. This is *fitable and agreeable* to other places of Scripture besides, as *Psal. 46. 7*, *The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge*. *Selah. Psal. 124. 1*. *If it had not been the Lord who is on our side, now may Israel say*. So *Psal. 118. 6, 7*, *The Lord is on my side: The Lord taketh my part, &c.*

There are *two manner of wayes* especially wherein God may be said to be for his Servants; The one is by way of *allowance*, and the other is by way of *assistance*: He is for them by way of *allowance*, so as to own them; And He is for them by way of *assistance*, so as to help them.

First,

First, By way of allowance, God is so far said to be with *his people*, as he does own them, and approve of them. Thus men are said to be *for one another*; and thus *is God* also said to be *with men*. And this again extends it self to three particulars more, wherein it is considerable:

First, He is for them, that is, for their *Persons*, to own and approve of them.

Secondly, He is for them; that is, for their *Principles*, to justify and maintain them.

Thirdly, He is for them; that is, for their *Wayes and Actions*, to countenance and stand for them.

First, The *persons* of his Servants, God is for them, Psal. 147. 10, 11, *The Lord takes pleasure in them that fear him, in them that hope in his mercy.* And he does manifest and discover it likewise, as we have it, Mal. 3. 16. speaking of those that *fear the Lord*, *And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I shall make up my Jewels, they shall be mine then*; that is, I will then shew them to be mine. They were his before by way of interest, but now they shall be his by way of acknowledgement; *Then shall ye return, and discern between the Righteous and the Wicked, &c.* After all the false habits of Hypocrites, and the scandals which are cast upon the *Righteous*, there's a time a coming when God will shew whom he is for, whom he does own and lay claim to as his. And that is such as are here mention'd in the Text, who are effectually called by him: Those whom others are most of all against, those will God be most of all for in that day.

Secondly, He is for them in their *Principles*; the Doctrines, and Truths, and Graces which are eminent in them, and whereby they are acted and moved. These God does own them in, and approve them for; whatever is of God's planting, it is of God's owning; He will maintain his own work. And this is Religion, and the work of grace in the heart; it comes from above: Both Godliness it self, and the Doctrine which is according to Godliness, it has its *Original from Heaven*, and so has God Himself to stand for it. The world oftentimes has low conceits and apprehensions of it, thinks it a mean and silly business, and thinks meanly of those that imbrace it: *But Wisdom is justified of her Children*; and not only of her Children, but of her Father. This will hold, when all the wisdom of the world will appear to be no better then folly, and come to nought.

Thirdly, He is for them also in their *Practices*, and Actions, and Wayes; as the principles of God's Children are approved of, and owned by Himself: So their carriage also, so far forth as it is sutable and agreeable to those principles: *The Lord knoweth, that is, he approveth, the way of the Righteous, but the way of the Ungodly shall perish*, Psal. 1. 6. Those that stand for God's wayes, he'll be sure to stand for theirs, so far forth as they sute, and accord, and agree one with another: I say, so far forth as they agree. It is not the wayes of those that are good, when they start out of the way, but when they follow it, and keep close to it. The wayes of good men as good, and as living in the power of Religion, are so far forth allowed of by God. He that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men, as the Apostle speaks, in Rom. 14. 18. *The righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his*
counte-

countenance doth behold the upright, Psal. 11. 7. And that's the first notion of the words, in regard whereof God may be said to be for these; namely, by way of allowance; In their Persons, in their Principles, and in their Actions.

Secondly, God is for all true Believers; not only by way of allowance, but also by way of assistance; not only to own them, but to help them, and to be useful to them for their greatest advantage. There is nothing wherein they need help, but they do receive help from Him in it; and so the Scripture still proclaims him, *their Help, and their Shield*: David is often in such expressions; and the sum of it comes to this, That God is near at hand to his Servants for the defence and protection of them from all kind of Evils and Enemies which may assault them, and set upon them. There's a common help and assistance which God does vouchsafe to all his Creatures, whereby he does uphold them, and sustain them in their proper beings, Heb. 1. 3, *Upholding all things by the word of his power.* But there's a peculiar help and assistance which God does vouchsafe to all his Children, whereby he does provide for their comfort and well-being; and this is that whereof we now speak. Thus God is with us and for us in every place and condition whatsoever which is incident unto us; In Sickness, in Poverty, in Disgrace, in Imprisonment, in Distress. There's no place so strait, but he can enter it; nor there's no place so remote, but he can reach it, and come unto it. God was with Joseph in the prison, with Jeremy in the Dungeon, with David in the Wilderness, with the Patriarchs in Egypt, with the Jews in Babylon, with the Apostles whiles they were scatter'd and dispers'd over all the World. And so in like manner is He withall his Servants still.

The ground hereof (to give you some account of it) is laid in two particulars:

First, In regard of his Interest which he has in them, as they do belong unto him: Interest it does ingage affection, and so consequently endeavour and assistance. Now this is one thing which is considerable in Believers in reference to God, they are such as are properly His, and therefore he cannot but be for them; *Fear not O Jacob, for thou art mine*, sayes the Lord, *Esay 43. 1.* Therefore it follows, *When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee.* This Relation it is founded in Christ, who hath taken our nature upon Him, and thereby brought us near unto God; He is Emmanuel, God with us; because he is first with us in our nature, he is therefore consequently with us in our persons, as many as do close with him, and by Faith rely upon him. And from hence he has now drawn us into the same Relation with himself: *I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father; to my God, and to your God, Joh. 20. 17.*

Secondly, There's not only his Relation, but also his Covenant: Persons who are Confederates, they are assistant one to another; and that upon the terms of mutual ingagement, as Jehosaphat said once to Ahab, *My horses are thy horses, and my people are thy people, &c.* Even so it is here betwixt the Lord and true Believers, He has ingaged himself to them to be theirs, and to stand for them upon all occasions, and so therefore must needs do it for that.

The Consideration of this Point is thus far useful to us; First, as matter of comfort and great encouragement to the Servants of God in all Estates and Conditions whatsoever: as the *Angel* saluted *Gideon*, *Judg. 6. 12, The Lord is with thee thou mighty man of valour*, the same may be said to every good *Christian*, and to the whole society and generation of Gods Children; and accordingly they may be very much hearten'd and encouraged from it, as we shall hear more afterwards. This truth being believed and digested, and thought upon, hath a great deal of sweetness and satisfaction in it: what though all men else should desert us and relinquish us, and with-draw from us; yet if we have God to own us, and assist us, and stand by us, we have that which may suffice us. *All men forsook me*, sayes *Paul*, *but the Lord stood by me, and strengthen'd me*, &c. *2 Tim. 4. 16, 17. Fear not Paul, for I am with thee*, sayes *God*, *Act. 18. 10.* And so to *Moses*, and so to *Joshua*, and so to *Jacob*, &c. Gods presence, and owning of his Servants in all conditions, has been a very great heartning to them, and has had cause to be so: for this, it is more than if all the world were with them besides. And this is that, which they are to suppose and take for granted. But to this may be haply objected, that the Servants of God now and then do by experience find it to be otherwise: That God is not so much with them, or for them, as is here pretended. It was the objection of *Gideon* to the *Angel* in the place before alledged, *If the Lord be with us, how then is all this befallen us?* And the Prophet complains to God, *Verily thou art a God that hidest thy self, O God of Israel, the Saviour*; as it is in *Esay 45. 15.*

For answer hereunto we must say thus much, that God is indeed with his Servants, but with these qualifications:

First, In his own Time: There's a season of Grace and Favour, and the Lord has a respect to that; He is alwayes with his Servants in Affection, and his secret purposes towards them; but he is not alwayes with them in the expression and manifestation of that Affection to them. This he does now and then defer and delay unto them, for reasons best known to himself.

Secondly, In his own Manner; we think that God is never for us, but when he is for us in our sense; but he has wayes which we think not of. The Lords thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his wayes as our wayes, as the Scripture tells us, *His wayes are unsearchable, and his judgments are past finding out.* He works oftentimes by contraries, and is then most of all for us, when he seems to be most of all against us.

Thirdly, Upon his own terms and conditions, we must take in that also. And that is of faith, and repentance, and new obedience, and close walking with him, as we may see *2 Chro. 15. 2, The Lord is with you whiles ye are with him, and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.* Those that walk contrary to God, he will walk contrary to them; and those that refuse to trust in him, they may come short of help from him: *He is a Buckler to them that trust in him*, &c. According to these Explications, the truth holds firm unto us, and it serves by way of Encouragement.

Secondly, It holds also as to Ingagement; If God be with us, it concerns us to be with him; and to carry our selves answerably towards him, we should own him, and all that is his; it is that which he both

requires, and expects from us. It is that which we have cause to do *absolutely*, without any *other consideration* besides; For the excellency which is in *himself*, but if we take in his carriage towards *us*, there we are to do it by way of thankfulness and retribution; it is now not only Rebellion, but Ingratitude, and perfidiousness to refuse to do it, and therefore we should make conscience of it: If we speak of it strictly and precisely, so indeed we are not able to do it, nor he does not need it from us, he is Absolute and All-sufficient in himself, and is able to make his party good without *us*; But we then do it *interpretatively*, and according to his gracious Acceptance, when we shew our good will and our Affections by our Indeavours for him.

There are two things in the world, which God is especially interested in, and whatever is done for *them*, he counts as done to himself; *His Truth*, and his *Children*; *goodness* it *self*, and those who are *good*. Now therefore when we *own these*, and are for *them*, we *own him*, and shall have the reward of it bestowed upon us.

First, His truth and goodness it self, we should all labour to be for *that*; Religion, and the truths of it are such things as are of a low esteem and valuation in the Eyes of the world, and there are two many which are *ashamed* of them. But it concerns those that mind their own happiness, to be all that may be Patrons of them, and to defend them all they can; for he that is ashamed of *Christ*, and of *his* words, of him will Christ himself be ashamed, when he comes in his Kingdom. On the other side, whosoever stands for them, he shall be sure to have full recompence and compensation made unto him. Therefore in our several places and opportunities, we should be mindful of it, consider what advantages God has given us of promoting Religion in the world, and be sure to be faithful to them: whether by our Prayers, or by our Counsels, or by our Speeches, or by our Interest, or the like. Beloved, It is an high piece of condescension on *Gods* part unto us, it is a great piece of *honour* to us, that he should commend his truth and ways to our care and indeavour, which makes us so much the more to be engaged in it. We do not so much *honour him* to undertake it, as he *honours us* to put us upon it, and accordingly we should esteem it, and make account of it. Besides that, there's nothing lost by it, there's not a word spoken for God, but it shall be remembered, and also rewarded; even there where *men* have forgotten it, and it may be opposed it, and spoke opposite and contrary unto it.

And so as for Gods Truth and ways, so for his Children, who are the Imbracers of them; we are then for God when we are for *these*, and so he also esteems it: Whatsoever ye have done for one of these little ones, sayes Christ, ye have done for me. This is all we are able to do for him, as David professes of himself, in Psal. 16. 2. *My goodness extendeth not unto thee, O God, but unto the Saints which are on Earth, and unto the Excellent in whom is my Delight, &c.* This is the Description in part of such a person as shall dwell in Gods Tabernacle; *In whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord*, Psal. 15. 4. And so now I have done with the first branch in this second General; to wit, the Supposition, or that which is imply'd, that God is for or with his Children.

The

The Second is the *Inference*, or that which is deduced from it, in these words, *Who can be against us?* Who can be against us? what a strange question is this? who rather *cannot* be against us? There's none who are *so likely or ready* to have any against them, than those who are *most for God*, or *God for them*. Let any men look after Religion, and they shall be sure to have enough against them, *Those that hate me*, sayes David, *are many in number, because I follow the thing that is good*. It is that which every one must make account of, that makes account to be *Religious* in good earnest, to have a world of Enemies at his heels, and that also for Religions sake; Satan, and all the world, and all the Train and Troops of darkness will bend their forces and power against him, and endeavour to do him all the hurt and mischief they can. Piety is the high rode to *Enmity*, and *malicious opposition*: As Christ himself was hated, so it will be also with those who are his Members. But therefore we are to take it according to these following Explications.

First, *Who can be against us?* That is, who can be *rationally* against us? It is not so much what any are *de facto*, but what they are *de jure*, not what they are in the *thing it self*, but what they *ought* to be; and what is *fitting for them*: Now for any to be against those whom God is for, it is the *absurdest*, and *most unreasonable* thing that can be; it is that which can have no colour or appearance of equity in it but is contrary to all sense, and *discretion*. Malice it is a *brutish* principle, and those that are acted by it, they do that which is most opposite and repugnant to the very being of a *Man*, if they consider things aright in themselves; and therefore when they reflect upon it; they cannot but be *ashamed* of it, as the Scripture it self intimates unto us: therefore it sayes, that with well-doing we may *put to silence the ignorance of foolish men*, 1 Pet. 2. 15. And 1 Pet. 3. 16, *Whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ*. The doing of any *irrational act*, it causes shame in the reflexion upon it: and such a thing is the hatred and opposing of those that are good: *Who can be against us?* i. e. who can be against us *rationally*?

Secondly, *Who can be against us?* That is, who can be against us *effectually*? This it holds both *Absolutely* and *Comparatively*, as we may take notice of it: First, take it *Absolutely*, *who can be against us?* that is, who can *at all* be against us? and so it reaches forth to us this Observation, That all the *Enmity and Opposition*, which men have at any time against us, it arises from hence so far forth as *God is not for us*. If he were every way for us, Man could not be absolutely against us. It is the Lord that *stirs up mens spirits*, or at least *permits* them now and then against his own Servants; wherein though they commonly act their own malice, and are carried by their own *curled principles*; yet they fulfil his Decree, and accomplish *those gracious Ends*, which he has purpos'd and set down *with himself*. Thus in 2 Kings 11. 14. It is said, that the Lord *stirr'd up an Adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite*. And again, in ver. 23. of the same Chapter, *God stir'd up another Adversary, Rezin the Son of Eliadah*; and he was an Adversary to Israel all the dayes of Solomon. This is most certain and unquestionable, that except the Lord were against us, Men could not be against us at all: How should

one chase a Thousand, or two put ten Thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up, *Deut. 32.30.* And our Saviour himself to Pilate, *Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above, Joh. 19. 11.*

All the Enmity of men, it is a limited and confined Enmity, because their Hearts, and Hands, and Affections, and Endeavours, are all at Gods disposing, who orders them and rules them as he pleases; If he listed and were so minded, as he could keep them from doing hurt (as we shall hear more afterwards) so he could keep them from any way attempting or endeavouring to do it. Thus Laban tells his Son in Law Jacob, *Gen. 31. 29., It is in the power of mine hand to do you hurt, but the God of your Fathers spake to me yesternight, saying, see thou speak not to Jacob either good, or bad.* Mark here, it is in the power of my hand, but it is not in the power of my spirit; or it is in the power of my hand Habitually, but it is not in the power of my hand Actually. Laban, he was stronger than Jacob, in regard of outward force; but he was not so in regard of Execution: God would not suffer him to do that which otherwise he was able to have done. If he gives peace, who then can make trouble? or when he hides his face, who then can behold him, *Job 34. ver. 29. Surely the wrath of men shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain, Ps. 76. 10.* It is the Lord, that lets out, or keeps in all the wrath that is in the world.

There's a double use which we may make of this Point to our selves: First, It should teach us in all the Enmities of Men against us, to consider how God himself stands affected towards us, and to have an Eye still to him. For if whiles he is for us none can be able to be against us, then whiles any are against us, it is an Argument, that he is not every way for us: I do not say it is an Argument he does not love us, or does not bear an affection to us; but it is a sign that we are so far forth out of his protection; if the Lord were absolutely and indefinitely for us, men could not possibly oppose us; if he did not give them some commission for the doing of that which they do, they could not possibly do it. Therefore, I say, we should still have a respect to him in all such conditions, to make us the more patient under them, and free from distemper in them; as David did in the cause of Shimei, when Abisbai would have persuaded him to revenge, *Let him alone, and let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him, in 2 Sam. 16. 11.*

Again secondly, we see here what's the way to prevent or to take off mens enmity and opposition from us; namely, by having recourse to God, and keeping in good terms with him. It is not so much by dealing with men themselves, (though that in its place is not to be neglected) but especially by dealing with God, who has all mens hearts and affections at his command. This is the way as to procure Friends, so to pacifie Enemies: as Solomon has pertinently inform'd us in *Prov. 16. 7, When a mans wayes please the Lord, he will make his Enemies to be at peace with him.* And that's the First sense of this Notion as it holds Absolutely. If God be for us who can be against us? that is, who can at all be against us.

The Second is, as it holds Comparatively, or by way of Qualification, Who can be against us? that is, who can be to any purpose against us? who can

can be against us? that is, who can prevail against us; who can be against us? that is, what matter if they be against us: *This* is the scope and drift of this *Question*, which is to be resolved into a *Negation*; who can? that is indeed, *none can*; This *who*, it is an *Indefinite* Expression, and it takes in all Persons with it, which we might conceive to have any *Enmity* or *Opposition* in them.

First, *Satan*, the great and grand *Enemy* of all, he shall not prevail against us. He is call'd the *Enemy* emphatically, because he is the great and grand *Enemy* of all. He is so both in a *Military* sense; and also in a *Forensical*; He is an *Enemy* as an *opposer*, and as one that *fights* against us, and he is an *Enemy* as an *Accuser*, and as one that *pleads* against us; but yet while God is with us, he shall prevail against us in *neither* acception. The God of peace shall tread down *Satan* under your feet shortly. And Gods people by their Faith quench all the fiery Darts of the Devil.

Secondly, *Evil men* who are *subservient* and *Instrumental* to *Satan*, they shall not prevail neither in all their attempts and endeavours in the Church. We have an eminent place to this purpose, in *Psal.* 129. 1, &c. *Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say: Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me. From my youth;* that is, from my very beginning, from the very first foundation of a Church in the world, in *Abel*, and in the Family of *Adam* there have been *Enemies* still to afflict it: yea, but those *Enemies* notwithstanding have not prevailed against it. *The Ploughers have ploughed upon her back long furrows; but the righteous Lord hath cut in sunder the Cords of the wicked.* So *Esay* 54. 7. *No weapon that is form'd against thee shall prosper; and every Tongue that shall rise against thee in Judgment, shalt thou condemn: when Balak the Moabite call'd upon Balaam to curse the people of God, Come, curse me Jacob; and come, curse Israel; what was the answer which he return'd unto him? ye may see in Numb. 23. 7, 8, How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I curse, whom the Lord hath not defied? As who should say, whiles God is with them, and for them, there's no attempt which will prosper against them. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel; Namely, as any reason or occasion for giving up to their *Enemies*. And what now follows hereupon, Therefore is there no *Inchantment* against Jacob, neither is there any *Divination* against Israel.*

Thirdly, *Christians* themselves, they shall not prevail neither; we may carry it to that likewise: Look how far God is not for any man, he is ready to be against himself, and to be his own greatest *Enemy*; there's enough in a mans own heart, and mind, and conscience, if there were no other besides sufficiently to oppose and disturb him, and to get the better, and the victory over him. But now whiles God is for a man, he makes him to be at peace with himself, neither his own lusts on one hand, nor his own fears on the other shall prevail against him. A mans *Enemies* sometimes are not only those of his own house, but also those of his own heart, which are in a nearer affinity and conjunction: and therefore it was the Prayer of that Holy man in former times, *Libera me Domine à meipso. Lord deliver me from myself, and the Enmity of my*
own

own Spirit. This God is able to do; and where he does it, he does it effectually and powerfully, and with a great deal of success. Thus we see how neither one or other, if God be for us, can prevail against us; *Neither Satan, nor men, nor our selves.*

Now there's a *threefold* ground, whereupon this Truth does proceed, and may be made good to us: First, from God's *Omnipotency*: It is impossible that those who are Enemies, should prevail against those whom he is for; because he is an *Almighty* God, and does whatsoever he pleases. *Men* who are sometimes Friends, they many times *wish* us well; but alas! they are *weak* and *feeble*; they may be for us, when they cannot *do* for us, at least that which they *would do*; and so we may fare ne'r the *better* for their Affection towards us. Yea, but the Lord now *he* is one *that is able*; *Greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the world*, sayes the Apostle *John*, as an account of this Truth, *1 Joh. 4. 4. And my Father is greater then all*, *Joh. 10. 29.* God cannot only preserve his Servants *notwithstanding* their Enemies oppositions; but likewise he can make those oppositions to be subservient to their preservation: He cannot only preserve them from them, but preserve them by them, through his *Almighty Power*.

Secondly, From Gods *Immutability*; therefore those whom God is for, can have none to prevail against them; because those whom he is truly for, he is for them for ever. *Men* they may be for us for the *present*; and a little thing may take them off *from* us, and set them *against* us. But it is not so with the Lord, whom he loves, he loves to the end, and his Affection to his people, it is incapable of any *Diminution*. If the Lord were for us only by *fits*, sometimes he were for us, and by and by he were not; the Enemy might take advantage of those fits, and from thence *prevail* against us; but now there is never any moment, wherein he is not ready to be for his Servants, *I the Lord change not; therefore ye Sons of Jacob are not consumed*, *Malach. 3. 6.* And it is of the Lords mercies that we are not *consumed*, because his *Compassions fail not*. *Lam. 3. 22.*

Thirdly, From Gods *Eternity*; He is one who *ever continues*, therefore those whom he is for, they are sure to have *none against them*: Though he should not cease in regard of his Affection, yet if he should cease in regard of his *Person*, we were at as great a loss as before. But this is the happiness of it, that he *always remains*. He is a *Rock of Ages*, an everlasting Rock, and so to be rely'd on. Hence he is for his Church, not only in *one Age*, but in *all*, to succeeding Generations. Parents and Progenitors, their protection goes away with their *Lives*; your Fathers where are they? And the Prophets, do they live for ever? Surely *no*, but *thou art our Father*. *Though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledges us not*, sayes the Church, *Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; Thy name is from everlasting*, *Esay 63. 16.* That's now the *second* Explication, *If God be for us, who can be against us?* That is, who can be against us *effectually*? whether we take it *absolutely*, who can be at all against us, or whether we take it *Comparatively*, who can be to *purpose* against us? The

The *Third* and last may be *this*, *Who can be against us?* That is, who can be safely against us? who can be against us with any convenience, or peace, or comfort, or contentment to themselves; to be against those whom God is for, it is not only a foolish business, as very irrational; nor is it only a frivolous business, as now *unsuccessful*; but it is also a *dangerous* business, as very *prejudicial*; There is another Emphasis which seems to be implied in this Question or Expostulation before us.

For any to be against the Servants of God, it is as the Scripture calls it to kick against the *pricks*, and that has a great deal of hazard and mischievousness in it: And the reason of it is this, because *love* it is a revengeful Affection and Jealousie; it is such as will not spare in the day of wrath. Those who are against those whom God is for, they are against those whom *God loves*; and those who are so, he'll be sure to meet with them at one time or other, as being in effect against himself.

The use of all (for a close) comes to this: First, As a word of caution to all such persons as are so affected. If there be any of this Temper, and Disposition, it concerns them to look to themselves, and by all means to suppress it, and overcome it. Those that hate the Children of God, God himself is interested in it, and accordingly will deal with them for it: Their Redeemer is mighty, *The Lord of Hosts is his Name*, and therefore we should tremble at it. Gods people, though they are but weak in their persons, yet they are strong in their Confederacy; *The Lord taketh my part with them that help me, therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me*; says David in the place before cited, *Psal. 118. 6.*

Yea, It is a dangerous thing to be against those whom God is for; not only *wittingly*, but *ignorantly*; not only *maliciously*, but by a *mistake*; that so none may give themselves scope in an *Affected Ignorance* in this particular: Though it is true, it is worst of all, when it is done knowingly and of set purpose; yet there are also sad inconveniences in it to do it before ones aware, that so every one may look about him, and consider what he does in such a business.

Secondly, Here's a word of comfort and consolation to the Servants of God under the greatest seeming disadvantages which may be upon them in this regard, that there are more *for them* than are against them, as *Elisba's* Servant, when he beheld the City encompassed with *Horses and Chariots*. *Alas! Master* (says he) *what shall we do?* And upon *Elisba's* Prayer, he saw the Mountain full of Chariots and Horsemen round about *Elisba*, which made good what *Elisba* had told him, *Fear not, for they that be with us, are more then they that be with them*, 2 King. 6. 15, 16, 17. And so again *Hezekiah* in regard of *Sennacherib*, and the *Affyrians*, 2 Chro. 32. 7, 8. *There be more with us then with them; with them, is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God, to help us, and to fight our Battels.* And the People rested themselves upon the words of *Hezekiah King of Judah*. And so should all others learn to rest upon such words as these are, and lay up such Truths as these
which

which are here *exhibited* to us against a Time of need. That so what is true in the general, we may occasionally have the comfort of it in our own particular.

So much for that, and so I have done with the *second* general part of the Text, which is the peremptory expostulation, both in the Supposition, and in the Inference; and so with the whole Text it self, and with this whole Paragraph, from Verse 31. to the end of the Chapter, *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us.*

SERMON



SERMON XXXVII.

R O M. 8. 32.

*He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all:
how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

There are two things especially which are the substance of God's Covenant with his people, in order to the things of this life: Protection, and Provision; Protection, as to the avoiding of Evil; and Provision, as to the injoyment of Good. And both of these are here exhibited and joyned together by the Apostle Paul in this present Chapter, for the encouragement of the believing Romans, to whom he here writes, as a proof and demonstration of Gods Fatherly care of them. The former, to wit, of Protection, that we have laid down in the verse immediately preceding; What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? The latter, to wit, of Provision, that we have here in this verse which I have now read unto you, and which I purpose, with Gods assistance, to handle.

IN the Text it self there are two general Parts considerable of us: First, The Conclusion or Proposition. Secondly, The Inference or Improvement. The Conclusion or Proposition, that we have in these words, *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.* The Inference or Improvement, that we have in these words, *How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

We begin with the first of these parts, viz. The Proposition it self; *He that spared not his own Son, but, &c.* wherein we have signified to us the love of God in his giving of Christ. And it is here laid down and set forth unto us two manner of wayes: First, Negatively, in these words, *He spared not his own Son.* Secondly, Positively or Affirmatively, in these words, *But delivered him, &c.*

First, To speak of the former, as it is exprest in the Negative; *He spared not his own Son.* And so there is this in it, That God did not spare even his own Son Jesus Christ Himself for the Good, and Comfort, and Salvation of his Elect. This Relative *He that*, it refers to the word God, in the verse immediately going before. Now whiles it is said here, That he did not spare him, (*ἐκ τῆς ἰσχυρίας*) it may be taken

X x x

two

two manner of wayes: Either first of all, As a word of *bounty*; Or secondly, As a word of *severity*. As a word of *bounty*, in reference to us, and so he did not spare him; that is, he did not *with-hold* him: He did not spare to give him, or part with him. As a word of *severity* in reference to him, and so he did not spare him; that is, he did not *favour* him. He did not spare to punish him, or to afflict him: The one in opposition to *Parimony*, the other in opposition to *Indulgence*.

First, Take it in the first notion, as a word of *bounty* in reference to us; He did not spare him, that is, he did not *with-hold* him; He was not unwilling to part with him, or sparing to give him. This is one sense of the word applicable to this purpose, that which in *Abraham* was a token of his love to God, the same in God was a token of his love to us, in that he *with-held not his own Son from us*: Thou hast not *with-held thy Son*, even thine only Son from me, Gen. 22. 12. in *israel*, as it is in the *Greek*. So God did not think much to bestow his own Son *Jesus Christ* upon the world; take notice of that. This the Scripture is plentiful in signifying and declaring to us, as *Joh. 3. 16*. So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. So *1 Joh. 4. 9*, In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. And *Gal. 4. 4*, When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, &c. In all these places, and the like, is set forth God's bounty towards us in giving of us his Son.

Now for the better opening and amplifying of this great Gift unto us, and the great love of God to us in it. We may take notice of it briefly in the several Gradations of it, wherein it is considerable of us.

First, For the kind of it; It was a Son, *quod* He spared not him. There's many an one in the world that would be loth to part with a servant, such as he might be; but a Son, that's somewhat more. There are a great many who could be content sometimes to spare many other things besides, so that you'll be content to spare their Children, or to let them to spare them themselves. You know how it was with old *Jacob*, how loth he was to part with his Son *Benjamin*, although it were but for a little season, and to get Food for himself and his Family. And we read in our own English stories, in the dayes of *Queen Mary*, of a woman that was offer'd great matters to part with her Child, and to resign her right in him; and she refused them, and would not hearken to them. But here now was the infinite goodness & transcendency of God's love to us, that he spared not even his Son for us, that he might purchase the Redemption of us: He spared not Him that was in so near a Relation to Him. And that's one part of the Gradation, for the kind of this Gift: It was a Son; which hath so much worth and excellency in it.

Secondly, For the Propriety of it; As it was his Son which he did not spare, so it was his own Son too, *quod* He spared not Him. We see how all men are generally very indulgent of what belongs to themselves; and those who make little of others Children, yet for their own they are tender enough of them, and willing to spare them. Nurses, and Guardians, and Overseers, are very often remiss and careless enough of other mens Children which are committed unto them; but their own

own are more indulg'd by them; *Deal gently with the young man Absalom for my sake.*

You know how it was sometime with the woman in the Famine of *Samarita*, that had perswaded her Neighbour to boil and eat her Son, when it came to her own, she *bid him*, and would not part with him. This is that affection which *nature* hath implanted in people towards their *own*, whiles they care not, in the mean time, how they misuse and handle others. Yea, but here now was the great goodness and love of God manifested to us, in that he *spared not his own Son* for us.

His own Son, how so? namely, by eternal and inexpressible Generation, being of the same *substance with the Father*, begotten of him before all worlds. Heb. 1. 5, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* Thus Job. 5. 18. Christ calls God his *own Father*, which the *Jews* rightly understood of *natural Fatherhood*; though not knowing Christ, they falsely charged him with *Blasphemy* for it, because that thereby he made Himself to be *equal with God*, which indeed he was. There are three sorts of *Sons* which are fasten'd upon God in Scripture: First, His Sons by *Creation*; and so the *Angels* are call'd his Sons, Job. 38. 7. Secondly, His Sons by *Adoption*; and so the *Saints* are call'd his Sons. And thirdly and chiefly, His Son by *Nature and eternal Generation*; and so the second Person in *Trinity*, who is Jesus Christ: Now *this Son*, this *own Son* of his, God did not spare.

Thirdly, (Though not here express'd in the Text) yet mention'd in other places of Scripture; It was his *only Son* likewise; it was the *only* begotten of the Father, in Job. 1. 14. This is a farther amplification of it to us, where there's store, and choice, and variety; it is not so hard or difficult matter as otherwise to part with some one, but to part with an *only Son*, that's a great matter indeed. Therefore it is made a special expression of extraordinary mourning, *That they shall mourn as one mourneth for his only Son*, in Zech. 12. 10. *Why herein also was Gods love towards us, that he hath given his only Son for us:* His Son, yea his Son and Heir, as we find him there called, in Heb. 1. 3.

Lastly, It was his *dear Son*, the Son of his *Love*, as he is call'd, in Col. 1. 13. The Son that's like him, and the very *Image* of Him; he parted with Him. There are many Fathers that sometimes part with their Sons, but what are they? such as they care not to keep; but as things stand with them, are glad to be rid of them, *ungodly, ungracious, unruly, and rebellious Children*; or such Children perhaps which they have little fancy or affection unto; yea, but God here he parts with his *Darling, and Delight, and Beloved*; *The Son in whom he is well pleased*, as he signifies it of him both at his Baptism and Transfiguration; *Even him he hath not spared neither, but has been willing to give him up for us.* Thus we have seen this Gift in all the Gradations and Inlargements of it; His Son for the *kinds* of it, his *own Son* for the Propriety, his *only Son* for the *Restriction*, his *beloved Son* for the *Affection*, and the special and singular respect which he bare unto him.

Now what does all this teach us, but to labour to *work our selves* to the like frame and disposition of spirit to God again? That we from henceforth should think nothing too good or too dear for him. If he did not spare *his Son* for us, what should we stand to spare, or to part

with for his sake? How should this teach us at his request to deny our selves upon all occasions. There are divers things which God sometimes by turns calls for at our hands. Sometimes he calls for our *Estates*, that we should part with *them*; sometimes he calls for our *Honors*, that we should despise *them*; sometimes he calls for our *Lives*, that we should lay down *them*; sometimes he calls for our Friends and Children, and nearest and dearest Relations, that we should resign and give up *them*. Now though this be somewhat hard and difficult to Flesh and Blood, and we are ready upon the mentioning of it, to shrug and shrink at it; yet we see here from this Point before us, what great *cause and reason* there is for it, when we shall consider how God for *us* has not spared a greater matter then this comes too, whiles he has not spared his own Son. Let us seriously set our selves to *think* of this Argument, and desire God, by his Spirit, to inforce and improve it, and set it home upon our hearts, that accordingly we may be wrought upon by it.

But what do I speak of sparing such things as these, as I have now mention'd, when (as I am ashamed to speak of it) men will *not spare sometimes* such things as are of a far lower and more *inferior nature*? Not spare their *Sins*, not spare their *Vanities*, not spare their foolish and unjustifiable Customs, nor their vile and inordinate Affections? How will they part with their *money* for Christ, that will not part with their *unlawful gain*? How will they part with Garments for Christ, that will not part with that *wanton attire*? How will they part with their *Relations* for Christ, that will not part with their corrupting Associates? yea, how will they part with their *Lives* for Christ, who are not willing to part with their *Lusts*.

What can they spare for God, that cannot spare him a little *time* and opportunity for the serving of him? not spare him a *Sabbath* to be spent in the exercises of Religion, not spare him an *hour* for converse and communion with him. They which grudge him every thing which is taken from the serving of themselves, how can they spare him those things which are of greatest Concernment? But so much may be spoken of God's not sparing his Son in the first sense, namely, as it is a word of *bounty*, and refers to *us*; He did not spare him, *i.e.* He did not *with-hold* him: He did not spare to give Him.

The second is, as it is a word of *severity*, and refers to *Christ*: He did not spare him, that is, he did not *favour* him; He did not spare to *punish* or to *afflict* him. Thus also he did not spare him for our sakes; the forbearance or mitigation of punishment, it is usually express'd by this word of *sparing*: Now this is here denied of God in reference to his Son. This we have most fully and excellently set forth unto us by the Prophet *Esay*, in the 53. Chapter of that Book, in sundry passages of it: In the 4th and 5th verses speaking of *Christ*, *We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted: He was wounded for our Transgressions, He was bruised for our Iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him.* And so again in the 10th verse, *It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief, &c.* See here, what a company of phrases and expressions here are altogether, to set forth this Truth unto us of God's not sparing of his own Son in this particular; *He struck him, and smit him, and*

and wounded him, and bruised him, and afflicted him, and put him to grief. He dealt with him in a great deal of rigor, which made him to cry out in the anguish and bitterness of his Soul, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Thus did the Lord now do even with his own and only Son, in his Sufferings for us; He did not spare him or abate him any thing, but made him to pay every farthing which was due to his Justice upon our account.

First, In his body, he did not spare him, or favour him here; but put him to a great deal of torture and torment on our behalf. He wrackt him in every joynt and member of him, whiles he hung upon the Cross; His Head and his Hands, and his Feet and his Sides, they were all put to exquisite pain and grief which he indured in them; not one part freed or exempted from it.

Secondly, In his Name, he did not spare him in this neither, but gave him up to the scorn and derision, and reproach of all his Enemies: No Eye pitied him, or bemoan'd him, or had compassion upon him; but rather on the contrary, laugh'd and shook their heads at him, and rail'd upon him.

Thirdly, In his Soul, he did not spare him neither in this, but poured forth the Vials of his heavy wrath and indignation upon him. Christ suffered in his Soul, not only by way of sympathy, as the Soul does usually suffer in the pains and torments of the Body, which it is joyned withall, but also by the immediate infliction of anguish upon the Soul it self, which was exercised with a great deal of sadness and sorrowfulness, and horrore and vexation in it. And therefore in the place before cited, he is said to be smitten of God: Smitten of God, not only as all his other Sufferings were order'd by him, but also as this was more particularly and immediately from him. His Enemies, they could smite him in his Body, but none could smite him in his Soul but his Father: Devils and wicked men, they may afflict a mans soul remotely, and, as it were, at a distance, by proposing and offering arguments and occasions of grief and discontentment to it; but to torment the Soul directly, this is only from God Himself. And this he did not spare to do, even to his dearest Son; He spared him not here, But made his Soul to be an offering also for Sin, as it is again in that place, *Esay 53. 10.*

This was a great Discovery and Declaration of God's goodness still to us; That he spared not his own Son, spared him not as to matter of punishing, which other Fathers are most ready to do, and sometimes inordinately. We read in *Mal. 3. 17.* when God speaks of the sparing of his people in common and general Calamities, he uses such an expression as this is about them; *They shall be mine in that day when I shall make up my Jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.* A mans own Son, and a mans own Son that serves him, his dutiful and obedient Son, such an one he is very willing to spare; yea, but the Lord he did not so here with his Son Jesus Christ. He spared not Him, spared not his own Son, spared not his Son that served him, that came on purpose to do his will, and that was obedient to all his Commands.

The reason of it was this, because he did not look upon him in his Person, but rather in his Office, so far forth as he bare the burthen of our Sins and

and Transgressions upon him. When he looked upon him in *his Person*, there were all the Engagements and Inducements of love and sweetness that could be: But when he look'd upon him in his *Office*, as our Surety, and standing in our stead, who had sin'd against him; here he was full of *Wrath and Indignation* against him. For *this* cause then he did not spare him, that so he might spare us: That he might deal the more favourably with *his people*, he dealt the less favourably with *his Son*; which is a matter of great comfort and satisfaction to us, and makes the more for our *Incouragement*. Papists, and such inconsiderate persons, that would have Christ to suffer only in *his Body*, and not in *his Soul*, and so therein do make God in some manner to spare *his Son*; what do they get by it in conclusion, but that by sparing of him, he should not spare them, which will follow upon it; For what-ever is not paid by the *Surety*, is accounted to the *principal Debtor*, and will be set upon his score. We have not only *bodily sins*, but also *spiritual*, and those which are *spiritual* of the highest nature. These must be satisfied for in the *Spirit*; and if not by *Christ*, by *our selves*; and where are we then?

Therefore let us own this perfect and compleat satisfaction of Christ to the Justice of his Father, and his Fathers *general and universal* punishing of him, and not sparing him at all. And let *his* not sparing of him, teach us not to spare *our selves*, nor our *sins*, what-ever they be, but proceed against them with all the *severity and impartiality* that can be imagin'd. And if God spared not *his Son*, let not earthly Parents spare *theirs*, as to any thing which is *evil* in them; *chasten thy Son whiles there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying*, Prov. 19. 18. And so much may be spoken of the Proposition, as it is considerable in the *Negative*, in these words, *He that spared not his own Son*; which we have taken notice of in a *two-fold* Explication: First, As it is a word of *bounty*; He did not spare to give him. And secondly, As it is a word of *severity*; He did not spare to punish him.

Now the second is laid down in the *Affirmative* or *Positive* expression, which is in a sort included in the former: And so I shall be the briefer in it, in these words, *And delivered him up for us all*; wherein again we have *two Branches* more: First, The Action it self; and that is, that he delivered him up. Secondly, The Persons it referred to, or which had special and actual benefit by it, and that is exprest to be us all.

First, For the action it self, *παρέδωκεν*, He delivered him up, Rom. 4. 25, He was delivered for, &c. There were three sorts of Persons which had an hand in the delivering up of Christ: First, God deliver'd up *his Son*. Secondly, Christ deliver'd up Himself. Thirdly, Judas deliver'd up his Master. Now that which we have here exhibited to us is the former of these deliverings, to wit, God's delivering up of *his Son*; He spared him not, but deliver'd him up. This he might be said to do *two manner* of wayes especially: First, In regard of *his eternal purpose and counsel*. Secondly, In regard his ordering and disposing of it in the *fulness of time*.

First, God delivered up *his Son*, in his own Decree and Purpose, and fore-appointment from all eternity. Thus Act. 2. 23, Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, have ye taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. God did before all Worlds decree the giving up of Christ, and therefore he is said to be a Lamb slain before

before the foundation of the world was laid. It was God that first found out this way of redeeming the world by the blood of Christ.

Secondly, It was God also that ordered and disposed his delivering up in due time: It was God that did regulate the malice of the Jews in the condemning of him, and putting him to death, so that what-ever they did to him, they did by Gods Providence towards him; And that which his hand and his counsel had determined before to be done, as it is again in Act. 4. 28. As He voluntarily resign'd himself to the will of his Father, so his Father also voluntarily resign'd him, as it were, to the will of his Enemies. And therefore He Himself so spake to Pilate, *Thou couldst have no power against me, except it were given thee from above; and therefore he that delivered me to thee hath the greater sin*, Joh. 19. 11.

But what did God deliver up this his Son unto? To the Treachery of Judas, to the Injustice of Pilate, to the malice of the Jews; to Reproaches, Bufferings, Revilings, Crucifying, and what not? To his own heavy Wrath and Indignation, which he exprest against him. To all these did God the Father give up his Son.

This does no way excuse the wickedness of man, but it advances the goodness of God. If God deliver'd up his Son Himself, may some say, what fault in his Enemies and Persecutors? yes, very much; because that they herein as they did execute Gods Decree, so they did act their own malice, and wickedness, and corrupt affections. In the same giving-up, sayes St. Austin, *Dens est pius & homineus quia in re una quam fecerunt, causa non est una, ob quam fecerunt*: God is just, whiles man is unjust, because in the same thing which they did, the cause is not the same for which they did it.

Therefore let the Use of it rather be, to magnifie the free Grace of God and his goodness to us, in that hereby he hath provided such a means for the accomplishment of his Justice and Mercy, and thereby establish'd and confirm'd our Redemption, which we may rest fully satisfied withall. And moreover, it may shew us the vile and wretched nature of sin, which nothing else was able to expiate. And so much of the first Particular, which is observable of us in this passage, viz. The Action it self, He delivered him up.

The second is the Persons it refers to, and who are more particularly concern'd in it; that is in these words, *For us all*; that is, for St. Paul himself, and all such persons as he was. Now, who were they? this we may easily guess at, by considering under what notion he here speaks of himself; St. Paul was under a threefold capacity, which was sustain'd by him: There was his humane capacity, as he was a man; there was his Apostolical capacity, as he was a Minister; and there was his Christian capacity, as he was a Believer. To take it in the first sense, *For us all*; that is, all us men; that would make it too large. To take it in the second sense, *For us all*, that is, only us Ministers, that would make it too narrow. Therefore the best way is to take it rather in the third; *For us all*, that is, all us Believers, and none but such. It is an expression of Latitude, together with an expression of Restriction; Of Latitude, in the word *All*; of Restriction, in the word *Us*: Here's *specialis universitas electorum*, as Prosper has it. If we take it in regard of sufficiency, remotely, and in the general proposition, so it respects all men: But if we take it in regard of efficiency, immediately, and

and as to particular application, and special intention, so it respects only *all Believers*, and so the Scripture still expresses it to us; He made his Soul an offering for his *seed*, He shed his Blood for his *Church*, He laid down his life for his *sheep*, He saved his *people* from their Sins, and such Restrictions as these are.

This is further clear from the very *Context*, and the *Coherence* of these words here in this Chapter, where this *us* it plainly refers to such persons as he had mention'd before, whom he had *fore-known*, and *predestinated*, and *called*, and *justified*, and was *for*; which is not all men at large and in general, but only a set number of persons in particular. But it is not my purpose here at this time to fall upon the Point of *universal Redemption*, which I have had occasion to speak of at large heretofore out of another Scripture: Besides, that it is not the thing which is so much intended here in the Text, but comes in only by the by; only it was requisite to say somewhat for the Explication, and right understanding of the words themselves, as they lie here before us in this Scripture. That which is mainly here observable of us at this present time is, how the Apostle enlarges the *Death and Suffering* of Christ in the efficacy of it to *all Believers*, without exception; He delivered him up for *us all*, that is not only for the Apostle Himself, but for the *Romans*; not only for more *eminent Saints*, but even for weaker *Christians*. These have a share and interest in it, and comfort and benefit from it, as well as the other; and accordingly may make use of it to themselves. And so now I have done with the first general part of the Text, which is the Conclusion or Proposition it self, as it is laid down two manner of ways; in the *Negative*, and in the *Positive*: Both together, in these words, *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all*.

The second is the *Inference or Improvement* of this premised Proposition, in these words; *How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* It is propounded in the form of a *Question* or *Expostulation*, thereby to make it more *emphatical*; *How shall he not?* that is, indeed he shall, or he will do thus and thus for us. Now this passage here in the Text may be looked upon by us two manner of ways: Either first of all, *simply and absolutely*, as it lies in it self. Or secondly, *Connexively and Argumentatively*, as it is inferred by way of *rational consequence and deduction* from that which went before.

First, Take it *simply and absolutely*, as it lies in it self, and so there is this in it, That God will *with Christ* give all things freely to those who are *true Believers*. This is here laid down as a *special Priviledge* which does belong to the *Children of God*: Wherein again there are *three distinct Particulars* considerable; First, The Gift it self, and that is *all things*. Secondly, The *foundation* of this Gift, and that is *Christ*. Thirdly, The manner of *Donation*, and that is *freely*.

First, For the Gift it self: This is here express'd to be all things, *in sum*, God will bestow upon all his Children all good things which are convenient for them. This is the Point which we have here before us, and it is agreeable to other places of Scripture, as in *Psal. 84. 11*. *The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory, no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly*, which comes home to this expression of the Text.

First,

First, All *temporal* good things, and which make for the good of the outward man, he will give such things as these, *Psal. 23. 1. The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want: Psal. 34. 10. The young Lyons do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Psal. 37. 3. Trust in the Lord, and do good: so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.* In these and the like places of Scripture, we have the promise of temporal good things to them that fear the Lord, which he will not fail to bestow upon them.

Indeed, we must take in this with it, for the right understanding of it: First, That they be so circumstanced to them, as not to hinder them in that which is better. God so takes care of the *Bodies* of his Servants, as that especially he looks after their *Souls*, and so provides for their *Temporal Condition*, as that especially he minds their *Eternal*; and will have them to mind it themselves, *Matth. 6. 33. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and all other things shall be cast in upon you.* Secondly, It is upon condition also of their Faith and reliance upon him, in the use of all good means, which in his Providence he affordeth unto them: Thus he gives all things *temporal*.

Secondly, All *spiritual* good things, all things pertaining to life and godliness, *2 Pet. 1. 3. Godliness hath the promise as of this life, so especially of that which is to come.* He gives them Grace and Glory; Grace here, and Glory hereafter, His Word and his Spirit, both in the *Graces* and the *Comforts* of it: He hath blest us with all *spiritual blessings* in heavenly places in Christ, as the Apostle Paul there takes notice of it, and blesses him for it, in *Ephes. 1. 3.* And this for the Gift it self, *All things.*

The second is the *foundation* of this Gift, and that is, Christ with him; whiles it is said here, *with him*, this may be taken three manner of ways: First, By way of *eminency*; *All things with him*, that is, all things in him, as involv'd and imply'd. Secondly, By way of *Concomitancy*; All things with him, that is, all things to him, as added and subjoyn'd. Thirdly, By way of *Conveyance*; All things with him, that is, all things by him, and through him, and for him, as dispensed and transmitted.

First, God will give and does give to Believers all things with Christ; that is, all things in him by way of *eminency*; whiles he gives them Christ, he gives them every thing else besides, because that Christ has in him the Excellency and Perfection of all other things; what-ever is to be found in the *Creature*, it is in Christ after an *eminent manner*: He that has Christ he has all, as being all in all, as we find him called, in *Col. 3. 11.* This is the reason why Christ does so confidently require us to be content to part with all things for his sake; because what-ever we part withall in the *Creature*, we are sure to have supplied in Himself.

Secondly, All things with Christ; that is, all things to Christ by way of *concomitancy* or *addition*. Those who have the Person of Christ, they have the Benefits of Christ with his Person: As he that hath the *Field*, hath the *Pearl*, and the *Treasure* which is hid in it; He that hath the *Son*, hath life, and so all things belonging to life, *1 Joh. 5. 10.* He has Christ and the *Righteousness* of Christ imputed to him; he has Christ and the *spirit* of Christ bestowed upon him: Christ is of God made unto us (whatsoever is necessary for us) *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption*, in *1 Cor. 1. 30.*

Y y y

Thirdly,

Thirdly, All things *with* Christ; that is, all things *by* Christ, and *from* Christ, and *for* Christ, by way of *Conveyance*; what-ever a Believer partakes of, he partakes of upon Christ's *account*, and as derived to him from him. And so in this regard he has them blest and sanctified to him: *All things are yours*, sayes the Apostle to the *believing Corinthians*, and why? because *you are Christs*, and *Christ is Gods*, 1 Cor. 3. 21. Christ he is the Heir of all things, and Believers being members of him, are from hence co-heirs *with him*. Wicked men they may have a *natural and civil* right in the Creatures, which is not to be denied unto them; but a *spiritual and sanctified* is properly to the members of Christ, and this they have: they have all things *with him*; that is, all things *from him*, and *for him*. And that's the second particular considerable here in this passage, The *foundation* of the Gift, which *is Christ*.

The third is the manner or circumstance of *donation*; and that in our *English Translation* is here exprest to be *freely*; *He will freely give us all things*. This is *somewhat*, but yet not all which is intended here in the Text; the Greek word is *χαρις*, which signifies *two things* especially, not only to give *freely*, but also to give *favourably*. And so we may here take it, God does *with Christ* give all things *gratuitously*, and God does with Christ give all things also *graciously*, and in *favour* to those who are his Children.

First, He gives us all things *freely*; to take it as it is here in our *Translation*, as God gives us *Christ Himself*, so he gives us all things *else freely with Christ*. And when it is said *freely*, we are to take it in the full extent of *freeness*; *freely* without our *desire*, and *freely* without our *desert*; of his *own accord*, and upon his *meer Grace*.

First, Of his *own accord*, and *meer motion*, without our first moving or provoking of him. This is observable in many things which God bestows upon us, that he oftentimes prevents the *prayers and desires* of his people, and gives them such things as they did not *think* of themselves to ask them of *Him*. There are many which will give, it may be, when they are intreated and much importuned; yea, but God gives of his own inclination, *freely*, without our *desire*.

Again, *Freely* too without our *desert*. There are many who sometimes may give *Gifts*, but then they have already, or expect as good as that which they gave: they give to those who will give to them again: So that it is not so much a *Gift*, as a *Payment*, either in a way of *equity* or *ingenuity*; yea, but it is not so with God to us, there's no such terms as these between us; we are not *afore-hand* with him, so as to *merit* any thing at his hands: *Who hath given to him first? and it shall be recompensed to him again?* Rom. 11. 35. As what he gives is sometimes of his *meer motion*, so alwayes of his *meer Grace*. He loves us *because* he loves us, and bestows good things upon us, because he has a *mind* to do so.

But then if we take *freely* in the Latitude of our *English Idiom* and *Propriety*, so there's still somewhat more in it: *Freely*; that is, *largely and plentifully*, without *diminution*: *He giveth us all things richly to enjoy*, 1 Tim. 6. 17. And *freely*; that is, *readily and chearfully*, without *restraint*; not *grudging*, not *repenting*, not *upbraiding*: He gives us all things *gratuitously*.

But

But then secondly, He gives to those which are Believers all things *graciously*, that's also, I say, here implied in the word in the *Text*. Those things which he gives his Children, he gives them *favourably*, and so do God's Children themselves apprehend it, and make mention of it. As *Jacob*, when his Brother *Esau* ask'd him concerning his Children, *Who they were*? He makes him this Answer, *The Children which God hath graciously given thy Servant*, Gen. 33. 5. He does not only say, *These are my Children*, which another man perhaps would commonly have said; but the Children which God hath given me, and the Children which God hath given me *graciously*: So *favourably* are the expressions of *gracious and spiritual persons*, especially when they speak of the mercies of God unto them. Taking all things from the hand of God, and from his hand, as *in favour* to them; as we find the like expression also used by the Prophet *David*, in *Psal. 44. 3.* speaking concerning *God's people*, and what God did for them, because he had a *favour* for them.

When we say, That God gives all things to his Children *favourably* or *graciously*; there's two things in it: First, *Favourably*, as to the *Principle*. And secondly, *Favourably*, as to the *Effect*. He gives them them *favourably*, as to the *principle*, by *intending* favour to them in them, and giving them them for that *end*. And he gives them them *favourably* as to the *Effect*, by *making* them favours to them, and doing them real good by them; and all this because he gives them them for *Christ's* sake, in whom they are accepted; which is the difference betwixt his Gifts to his own Children, and his Gifts to *wicked men*; to whom what he gives is oftentimes in *anger*, and besides turns in the event to their greatest evil and ruine. And so much may be spoken of this *second general part* of the *Text*, in the first notion and consideration of it, that is simply and absolutely in it self, and as containing this truth in it, That God will with *Christ* give all things else freely to those who are true *Believers*.

Now further secondly, We may look upon it in its *connexion*, and *argumentatively*, as *inferred* by *rational consequence* from that which went before. If God hath not spared his Son, but delivered him up for us; we may well conclude, that he will bestow all things else freely upon us. This is the *main scope* of the *Text*, and the Argument holds good upon a two-fold ground or foundation: First, From the quality and condition of the *Persons*. Secondly, From the nature and condition of the *Gifts*. By comparing of each of them one with another:

First, From the quality and condition of the *persons*, by comparing of them; If God had so much favour for us when we were *Enemies*, and at a distance from Him; how much more has he now that we are *Friends*, and at peace with him? He hath given us *Christ* then, and how much more will he with *Christ* give us all things else besides? This is a very forcible Argument, and the very *Apostle himself* teaches us to reason after this manner, as we may see in *Rom. 5. 10.* For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled unto God by the death of his Son: much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life? It is much easier to do kindnesses for *Friends* than for such as are *Enemies*.

Secondly, From the *Nature and condition of the Gift it self*: He that would give *his Son*, will not stick to give *anything else*; because he that would give the *greater*, will not stick to give the *less*. That which usually *restrains* men from giving, is the *worth and value* of that which is expected to be given by them. Now this here is no restraint at all, because God has already given that which is most precious, his own Son: He that gives a man a thousand pound, will not stick to give him a farthing. The consideration of this Point is thus far useful to us: First, As it teaches us to make sure of the *ground*. And secondly, As it teaches us to make the *Improvement*, to make sure of the *ground*; that is, that we have *Christ* given to us, and that we have a share and interest in *Him*. And to make the *Improvement*, by living in the *power and comfort* of this present truth, and by *practising* of this reasoning which the *Aposle* here does propound unto us.

First, To make sure of the *ground* and conclusion it self, seeing *our having of all things else* does thus depend upon *our having of Christ*, and in a manner *follows from it*; we see here what cause we have to make good our interest in *Him*, that we do belong unto *Him*: We have need of *Christ* not only for *Himself*, and such things as are immediate to him; but also for *other things* which do occasionally flow from him, and which we have also upon *his account*. And therefore we should be careful to look after him, and to partake of him, that so we may partake of such things together with him, and by vertue of interest in him, which is the *sweetest* and most comfortable enjoyment of them of any other way besides. Those things which *natural men* enjoy but in a way of *common Providence*, *Believers*, and those who are *good Christians*, they enjoy by conveyance from *Christ*, and that *title to them* which they have by him. And this is that accordingly which should be *endeavoured and pursued by our selves*.

Secondly, As we should make sure of the *ground*, so we should be also careful to make the *improvement*, and thus to *reason and argue within our selves*, as the *Aposle Paul* here sets us an example. Here's that which may very much comfort and *incourage the Children of God* against the fear of any *want whatsoever*, as in this world to happen unto them: It is that which they are apt now and then to be very *anxious and solicitous about*, according to the condition of the *Times* which are incident to them; *What they shall eat? what they shall drink? what they shall put on?* how far they shall be *provided for* as to this their *natural and temporal life*? Now here is that which may satisfy them, and may serve as a support unto them, That God having given them *Christ*, will not with *Him* deny them *anything* which is *requisite or convenient* for them: But they shall be sure either to have it in *kind*, or else made up to them in *Him*. He will give it them either in the *thing*, or else in the *equivalence*, and accordingly it does concern them to *persuade* and to *assure themselves*.

Here's that which may *convince* them of that *diffidence and distrustfulness* which is in them, and make them to be *ashamed*, as it were, of it. What, has God given thee the *greater*, and dost thou think that he will deny thee the *less*? Has he given thee *Heaven*, and dost thou think that he will deny thee *Earth*? Has he given thee *Eternal things*, and dost thou think that he will deny thee *Temporal*? Has he given thee his *Son*, and will he

he deny thee any thing else besides which it is sitting for thee to partake of or enjoy? No, assure thy self thou needst not call it into question. His giving to thee of the former, is a pledge, and assurance, and confirmation of the latter also unto thee; and thou both *mayest* and *oughtest* with Faith to depend upon him for it, in the comfortable expectation of it. There's no such comfort and ground of contentment in all the world, as the *Truths and Principles of Religion and Christianity*, where they are liv'd up to in the full power and improvement of them.

Again, As here is that whereby *Christians* may *satisfie themselves*, so here's that also whereby they may *work upon God*, and prevail with Him, by arguing and reasoning with Him, when they desire to have any such thing from him: Lord, thou hast been pleas'd to give me thy Son, and thy Spirit, and thy Grace, and some hopes of Heaven, and a better condition hereafter; and therefore do not deny me other matters which may be subservient to this present life. This is the nature of Faith, that it is a *propping and designing* Grace, and will be sure to make use of every thing as may make most for its own advantage; and where it spies any encouragement of it self, it will be careful to improve it to the utmost. And to this purpose should we labour to *nourish it*, and *cherish it*, and exercise it in our selves; and stir up others likewise to exercise it upon the like occasions, as the Apostle Paul does here these *Romans*, and in them us, and all other *Christians* in this Text which hath now been handled by us in both the parts of it; both the *Proposition* it self, and also the *Improvement*; He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all: how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

SERMON



S E R M O N XXXVIII.

R O M. 8. 33.

*Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect?
It is God that justifieth.*

There are two things especially, which are great obstructions to the Happiness of Gods People : Their Corruptions, and their Afflictions ; the evil of Sin, and the evil of Punishment ; and accordingly does the Spirit of God in Scripture ; And more particularly here in this Chapter secure them against the danger of either. Against the evil of Sin, by assuring them, that that is pardon'd ; and against the evil of Punishment by assuring them, that that is qualified and sanctified to their greatest Good and Advantage ; and especially so order'd to them, as by no means to separate them from Christ, or from the love of God in him. Upon which account, the Apostle Paul does break forth into an Holy Triumph, and Exultation, in each particular, which makes up the Conclusion of the Chapter : Our business is at present with the former ; viz. His Triumph over the evil of Sin ; Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect ? &c.

IN this present Verse before us, there are two general Parts considerable of us : First, *A peremptory Conclusion* ; and Secondly, *A convincing Argument*. The Conclusion that (to make it the more peremptory) is laid down in the form of a *Question*, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect ?* The Argument or Ground for it, as convincing of it, that is in these words, *It is God that justifieth*. Where, though the Question, or if ye will the Conclusion, be first in order of *Scripture* ; yet the Argument for the evidencing of it, is first in order of *Nature*, and therefore we will begin with that first as to the handling of it : Now this, it may be again taken two manner of wayes, either *Emphatically*, or *Exclusively* ; If we take it *Emphatically*, so there is *this* in it, that God does indeed justify his People, which are call'd his Elect. If we take it *Exclusively*, so there is *this* in it, that none does properly justify them, but he alone.

First, To take it *Emphatically*, God does indeed justify his Elect : This is that which we have declared in Verse 30. of this Chapter, *Whom he hath predestinated, them he hath also called ; and whom he hath called, them he*

be bath also justified : where Election passes through Effectual Calling to justification. For our better proceeding in this Point, it is requisite we should know what is here meant by justification. The Papists they understand hereby a making of one just, or righteous by a Physical transmutation of the quality or disposition of the heart from evil to good, which, although we say is in a degree concomitant to Justification (forasmuch as there is none whom God justifies, but he does put such qualities into them) yet we hold to be different from it, according to the language of Scripture : To justify therefore here, is (as we call it) a Judiciary or Forensical Act; an Expression taken from the Bar, and Judgement-seat : And it implyes as much as *this* with it; namely, to esteem, accept, account, and pronounce as righteous. Thus both the Hebrew word *Hitsdek*, and the Greek *dikaio*, are constantly taken in Scripture, as *Pro.* 17. 15. for the Old Testament, and *Act.* 13. 39. for the New, &c. And that this is the sense and meaning of it, may clearly appear unto us from the opposition, which is here made in the very Text; where as laying something to ones charge, is an act of Accusation; so on the other side Justifying, is an act of Absolution : And as the one does signifie not making sinful, but calling so; so the other does signifie not making righteous, but counting so.

As for the other term, which is the Elect, when we speak of it in reference to Justification, it is not to be taken precisely, but in its latitude and full extent : His Elect, and Called, both together; for otherwise these two may be separated; a man may be an elected person, and yet not for the present a justified Person; as Paul, when he persecuted the Church, who was not justified till he did actually believe, though even then in Gods secret purpose and counsel he was ordain'd and design'd to Salvation, thus *Rom.* 3. 26, That he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus; where Justification presupposes Faith in that person, who is the Proper and Immediate subject of it.

When it is said here that God justifies, there are two things imply'd in it, as making up the Nature of it : The One is, the not imputing of Sin; and the Other is, the imputing of Righteousness. First, The Not-imputing of Sin; This is one Branch of Gods justification of us, his not laying of sin to our charge, as it is express'd in the Text, thus *Micah* 7. 18, Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and that passeth by the Transgression of the Remnant of his Heritage, &c. This as to the Carriage of it, is both an act of Mercy, and act of Justice. It is an act of Mercy, in that he is willing to accept of a surety, and to appoint Christ to that Office for us, as to mediate in our behalf; and so for his sake to pardon, and to forgive all our sins unto us. And it is an act of Justice, in that having accepted of Christ for our surety, who has fully satisfied and paid the debt, he does through him look upon us as absolv'd and quitted, and righteous in his sight.

In the work of Justification, there is, as we may say in a sense, a remission and forgiveness of all kind of Sins at once, both past and to come; but so as must be cautelously and warily understood by us, and that with this difference, that Sins which are past, they are forgiven actually by an immediate application of Christs death to the true Believer : But Sins which are to come, they are forgiven only virtually; forasmuch as God is ready

ready to forgive them, whensoever a Christian shall be truly *humbled* for them, and *heartily repent* of them, and turn from them; such an ones person being accepted in general, his particular guilt shall be remitted to him.

The right understanding of this Point will help us to satisfy that Question, How far forth a justified person hath need to pray for the forgiveness of his Sins; forasmuch as they are all pardon'd and forgiven to him in one moment, in the very instant of his *Justification*.

To this we answer divers things; First, we have need to pray for the sense and manifestation of this pardon to us in our *own hearts*. There is a forgiving of Sins in the *Court of Heaven*, and a forgiving of them in the *Court of Conscience*; a forgiving of them by *God himself*, and a forgiving of them in *our apprehension*. Now it is requisite that we should pray for the latter, where the former is in *full vigour*. Secondly, There is not only required this Gracious act of God at first, in the pardoning and forgiving of our Sins for such a time; but likewise a further *continuing* of this Act and Grace unto us *all our life long*: And in praying for the forgiveness of our Sins, we pray for *this*. Thirdly, That the *Execution* of that Sentence which is pronounced in *Justification it self* may be more and more ripened and promoted; That is, that upon every new and particular guilt in us, there may be a renewed and occasional application of the satisfaction of Christ unto us. And lastly, That we may not only be justified and reconciled to God in general, as to the escaping of Eternal Condemnation; but likewise may be freed from all *suspensions* of his favour in particular, and the infliction of Fatherly chastisement and castigation. And so much of the first branch of *Justification* which is the *Not-imputing of Sin*.

The *Second* is the *Imputing of Righteousness*, that is to say, the *righteousness of Christ*; This the *Scripture* does also very plainly point out unto us in sundry places, as *Rom. 5. 18*, *Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation: even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. Philip. 3. 9*, *That I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. Therefore he is said to be our righteousness, in Jer. 23. 6. And we are said to be made the righteousness of God in him, in 2 Cor. 8. ver. 21, &c.*

This Obedience of Christ, both *active and passive*, is for the benefit and comfort of it, made *ours* only by *Faith*, apprehending, and laying hold upon Christ as he is offer'd in the *Gospel*. This is the *Condition* which is required on our behalf, thus *Rom. 3. 22*. It is call'd the *Righteousness of God*, which is by *Faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe, &c. in Rom. 9. 30. and Rom. 10. 6*. It is called the *Righteousness of Faith*. And expressly, in *Rom. 3. 28*, *We conclude that a man is justified by Faith without the deeds of the Law*. In all which places and the like, Faith is made that *on our part*, which is requisite to *Justification*. From these things thus laid together, we see the Point clear before us, and what is meant by this Proposition, when it is said, *That God does justify his Elect*: namely, thus much, that for Christs sake
appre-

apprehended by Faith, he doth graciously and freely absolve them from Sin and Death, and accept them as *Righteous to life*.

This Sentence of Justification was first of all *conceived* as it were in the mind of God, who decreed it long before, *Gal. 3. 8*. The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through Faith Preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, *In thee shall all Nations, &c.* Secondly, It was openly pronounced and declared in *Christ our Head, being now risen from the dead, Rom. 4. 25. In 2 Cor. 5. 19. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.* Thirdly, It is virtually included in our very first union with Christ. *There is therefore now no Condemnation (sayes the Apostle) to them that are in Christ Jesus.* Lastly, It is actually sealed by the Testimony of Gods Spirit in our hearts, witnessing together with our spirits, our atonement, and reconciliation with him. In all these respects does it appear, That God does justify.

Now over and above to this main Justification of all; this Sentence which God passes in himself, and pronounces also in our Consciences, there is a further Declaration hereof in open Court, which is to be expected and waited for by us, there will a time one day come, when God will thus also justify his Elect; that is, when he will shew and openly manifest who are his: *And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I shall make up my jewels, and I will spare them, &c. Then shall ye discern between the righteous and the wicked, when Christ shall place the Sheep at his right hand, and the Goats at his left, he will then declare the Innocency of his Servants, and signifie who they are that are most allowed of, and approved by him.*

This is such as makes very much for the Comfort and Happiness of Gods people, seeing they are such as God does justify, they are such as are very happy in the midst of all other Conditions, as *Psal. 32. 1, 2, Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered: Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile: where there is pardon of Sin, there is true blessedness indeed, and upon the Point no-where else besides. And that's the First Notion of this passage, as it may be taken Emphatically; God does indeed justify his Elect.*

The Second is as it may be taken Exclusively, *It is God that justifies, that is, there is none that justifies besides God; none have any thing to do to absolve and acquit a Sinner from guilt, but God alone, Thus Rom. 3. 26, That he might be just and the justifier, &c. Esay 43. 25, I, even I am he that blotteth out thy Transgressions for my Names sake. And so Esay 44. 22. The Pharisees were right for the Notion, though they were wrong in the Application. Mark 2. 7, Who can forgive sins, (say they) but God alone? It is God alone that justifies.*

And the reason of it is clear, because it is God alone against whom the Sin is committed; namely, in reference to future condemnation, and the Judgment of another world; It is God alone that condemns, and therefore it is God alone that justifies: It is he that casts into Hell-fire, and therefore it is he that must deliver from it.

Again, It is God only that knows the heart, and understands what is in man, and so alone can forgive; yea, It is he alone, who is without sin himself, and so alone can discharge us of it:

Z z z

This

This business of *Justification* is attributed by way of *special Restriction* both to the *principal Efficient*, and to the *Instrumental*, and to both of them very *truly*; thus we say, *It is God alone that justifies*. And again, *It is Faith alone that justifies*; both of these are true in *Divinity*, according to their *different Explication*. The one being referr'd to the *Instrument*, and the other to the *principal Agent*, when we say, *It is Faith alone that justifies*, our meaning is no more but *this*, that there is *no saving Grace* whatsoever that *is a fit and convenient hand for the laying hold* upon the righteousness of Christ, which is the *meritorious cause* of our *Justifying*, but *Faith alone*: and when we say, that *it is God alone that justifies*, we mean thus much, That there is *no other Person* who has to do in the *accepting* of this righteousness, and *imputing it to the Believer*, but only *God*.

Now the Consideration of this Point thus open'd and explain'd unto us in both particulars may be thus far improved by us: First, taking it *Emphatically*, it may serve to satisfy us in the *Nature* of our *Justification* it self, for the *performance* of it; seeing it is *God that justifies*, we may be sure that it is done as it *should be*, and so as we our selves may have a great deal of *Comfort*, as to the doing of it.

First, It is done *freely* without any thing *in us*, as *meritorious* or deserving of it, *Being justified freely by his Grace*, Rom. 3. 24. It is true that there are some things here required of us by way of *preparation*; As sight of Sin, Grief for Sin, hatred of Sin, resolution against Sin, &c. God does not justify men, *howsoever consider'd*, but under such and such *qualifications*; yet these not as necessary by way of *causality*, but only by way of *order*; not as having any *direct or immediate Influence* upon the thing, but as *remote Conditions* required in the *Person*, and subject to be *justified*.

To make it clear to you by a *Resemblance*, when we say, that he who will be *recovered* of any Sickness or Distemper whatsoever, he must first be sensible of his Disease, he must first *come* to the *Physician*, he must first take *Physick*, &c. we do not signify, that by any of these actions, or all of them taken together, he does hereby *merit* his health and *deserve it* to be bestowed upon him; but his health is still *obtained and procured* by the Skill of the *Physician*, and by the blessing of God upon it, even so here in this particular, when we speak of *preparatory works* in *Justification*, we do not intend that they *do procure it* by any *inherent efficacy* in them, but by the free Grace and Mercy of God, through the Redemption which is *in Christ*. *It is God that justifies*; Ergo, we are justified *freely*.

Secondly, It is *God* that justifies, therefore we are justified *fully*; fully without *Imperfection*, and fully without *reservation*; all the works of God are perfect, and compleat, and full of *exactness*; and so is *this* amongst the rest, as to the *pardoning and forgiving* of our *sins*; There is no falshood, nor deceit, nor hypocrisy, nor ill dealing in him. He forgives not some Sins only, but *all*, without exception; *who forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thine infirmities*, Ps. 103. 3. And where he remits the *sin*, he does likewise remit the *punishment*, where he remits the *Eternal punishment*, he does not exact the *Temporal*, as *Papists* fondly imagine; No, whiles it is *God* that justifies, we are justified *from all things*, Act. 13. 39.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It is *God* that justifies, therefore we are justified *truly*, and so as we may rest satisfied and quieted in this Justification; If our justifying were from any thing of *our own*, we could not have that *assurance* of it, in regard of our *weakness and imperfection*. But now being justified by *Faith*, which layes hold on the free grace and mercy of God justifying us *for Christ*, we have from hence *peace*, as with *God himself*; so likewise in our *own hearts and consciences*, and *rejoyce* in hope of the *Glory of God*. And this is the *Improvement* which may be made of the Point taken *Emphatically*, That *God does justify*; namely, as to the *Nature of Justification it self*, &c.

But *Secondly*, There is an *Use* which may be also made of it by us, as taking it *Exclusively*; and that is, as to the removing of *all other persons* besides from it. As,

First, It is *God* that justifies, and therefore not *we our selves*; It is laid to the charge of the *Pharisees*, that they were such as *justified themselves*, Luk. 16. 15, *Te are they which justify your selves, but God knoweth your hearts*, &c. So Luk. 10. 29. We read there concerning a certain Soul, that he was willing to *justify himself*. This same self-justification it is that, which the generality of the world are subject unto; yea, but it is that which will not here serve the turn; *I know nothing by my self* (sayes St. Paul) *yet am I not hereby justified, but he that judgeth me is the Lord*, 1 Cor. 4. 4. It is no matter what men think of *themselves*, but rather what *God* thinks of them, as it is 2 Cor. 10. ult. *Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth*.

Secondly, It is *God* that justifies; therefore not *Friends or Christian Acquaintance*, there are many who are ready to think themselves to be in a *good estate* as to a better life, because they have the *good opinion and estimation* of *others* that are good. It is true, this is well where there is somewhat else besides with it: But there's no trusting to *this alone*: No, It is *God* that justifies, not *Good and Godly men*, whosoever they be, they may sometimes *mistake* in this particular; sometimes from the prevalency of *Affection*, thinking so as they wish, and believing so as they would *have it*, whether *Parents* or any other *Friends*; sometimes from want of *Attention*, and not distinguishing of *Nature* from *Grace*; sometimes from the subtile carriage and craftiness of the *Persons themselves*, whom they so *approve*: In all these respects *men* may judge, and judge *amiss*, even the best men that *are*; but the Judgment of *God*, we know is according to *truth*, and therefore *chiefly* to be attended.

Thirdly, It is *God* that justifies; therefore not *Ministers or Pastors* of the Church, It is true as the Apostle speaks, we have committed unto us the *Ministry* of Reconciliation, but *all things* are of *God*, who has reconciled us by *Jesus Christ unto himself*, 2 Cor. 5. 18, 19. Ministers have not power to *forgive sins*; to wit, in that sense as the *Papists* would impose it upon us. Indeed it is true, there *is a power* which *God* has graciously committed to his *Ministers*, in order and reference hereunto; namely, in the Name of *Christ* to declare and pronounce such persons to be remitted, who *do truly repent*. But as for *Remission it self*, it belongs wholly and properly to the *Lord*. To speak distinctly in this Point for the right understanding of it, The Ministers have a Commission for the

laying open of the sweet promises of the Gospel, and the Mercy of God in Christ to all such persons, as are willing to leave their sins, and to turn unto him, which though as to the matter of it may be done also by any private Christian in the Communion of Saints; yet it is not done either with the like Authority, or with the like Efficacy. Not with the like Authority, as not having the word of Reconciliation so particularly committed unto him as the other has; and the Acts of a publick Officer are most Authentick: nor yet with that Efficacy, as not having the like promise of success annex'd thereunto.

In brief, this is the advantage which is considerable in Ministerial Absolution, that where a Minister does upon good grounds declare such a person to be pardon'd and justified in the sight of God, this Action of his shall be so far forth effectual to such a person as to the settling and quieting of his Conscience, which before could have no rest in it self. And in this sense is not only Declarative, but likewise Operative; not to the forgiveness of Sins absolutely, but as to the Evidences and Discoveries of it; and in that regard of greater use and availment than is alwayes apprehended, as being the Ordinance of God, which he has sanctified and allowed of for such a purpose as that is. This is that which seems to be intimated in Job 33. 23, 24, &c. *If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness: Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom. His flesh shall be fresher then a childs, &c.* It refers to the Office of the Ministry in this word of Reconciliation. And so I have done with the first general part of the Text, in the order, wherein I have now set it, and that is the Ground or Argument in these words, *It is God that justifieth*, whether we take it Emphatically or Exclusively, or both. Emphatically; He does certainly do it. And Exclusively, There is none (to purpose) that does it but He.

The Second is the Conclusion, which is enforced from it; and that to make it more significant, is propounded by way of Question; *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect?* And it carries the force of so much the stronger Negation or Denial with it; we may resolve it (for Explications sake) into three Questions more: First, *Who can?* Secondly, *Who may?* Thirdly, *Who dare?* *Who can?* It is impossible. *Who may?* It is unwarrantable. *Who dare?* It is dangerous. All and each of these are implied in this peremptory Interrogation.

First, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect?* That is, *who can do it?* It is impossible; it is impossible that Gods Elect, who (as we have heard) are justified by God, should have any charge laid unto them. And there's a threefold impossibility in it: First, there is nothing to accuse them of. Secondly, there's none to accuse them to. Thirdly, there's no-body to make, or to frame the Accusation against them, where neither of these are to be found, as indeed there are not; there there's nothing can be laid to their charge: It is impossible they should be accused, because all Accusations they do suppose and imply some, or all indeed of these particulars now mention'd.

First, There is nothing to accuse them of; there's no Ground or Matter of Accusation in the Elect and Justified of God. He that accuses a justified person, he may as well accuse an Innocent person; for it is all one
in

in effect, in regard of this business, where sin is not imputed; it is as free from all matter of charge, as where it is not at all committed. It is true, we do acknowledge that there is somewhat which in its own Nature is justly accusable in Gods Children, even the best of them that are. They are not freed or exempted from the remainders of Corruption in them, after the greatest change that is wrought in their hearts: But we say, that they are freed from the Imputation of these Sins unto them. Therefore it is not said here in the Text, who shall find any thing in Gods Elect? But who shall lay any thing to their charge? There is enough to be found in them, but there is nothing to be charg'd upon them: because whatsoever they are guilty of for their own particulars, it is satisfied and made amends for in Christ, who is their surety and hath undertaken for them, whiles he hath done thus, he hath freed them from all Accusation; Per subtractionem Materie, as we use to speak, by taking away the matter which this Accusation should be founded upon. That's one Consideration. There's nothing to accuse them of:

Secondly, There's no-body to accuse them to, or to receive any accusation against them; If God be for us (sayes the Apostle in the Verse before) who can be against us? And so if God justify us, who can accuse us, as having a fit person to lay our charge withall: Thus Esay 50. 8, 9, He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come near unto me. Behold, the Lord God will help me, who is he that shall condemn me, &c. So Job 34. 29. When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? There is no higher Court of Justice, then the Tribunal and Judgment of God himself; we see in the affairs of men, that that which is done in an higher Court, it cannot be nullified in a lower; and so it is here, God himself has pardon'd a Christian, and so there's no reversing it by any inferior Accusation; the Supream Judge has absolved him, and so will take no accusation against him: There is no body to accuse him to; that's a Second.

Thirdly, There's no-body to make or frame the Accusation; that is, who can do it with any success, or hope to prevail in it, Gods Children they have, as to the Attempt, many Accusers; but they have none as to the fastening of the Accusation with any disadvantage, none shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect in this Acceptation and Qualification of it, wee'll look upon them a little in their particulars: First, Satan he shall not accuse them; He that's their Accuser ex Officio, as I may so term him; and as he is call'd the Accuser of the Brethren; yet he shall not be able to accuse them with any success: we may see an instance hereof in his attempt and indeavour against Job, who whiles God justified him, it was to no purpose for the Devil to accuse him, Job 1. 8, and Job. 2. 3. sayes the Lord there to Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man; one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. This is the great happiness of Gods Servants in all the charges and accusations of Satan, that they have God himself taking their parts; and pleading for them in their behalf: And so they all at last come to nothing; the Accuser of the Brethren is both cast, and cast down, even he

he that accused them before God day and night, that is *uncessantly*, in Revel. 12. 10.

Secondly, For *evil men*, who are in this respect the *Instruments* of Satan, False-Accusers, even those shall be frustrate likewise in this particular; Those who are *Elect and Justified*, they shall not suffer from others *hard-conceits* or censures of them. They shall not suffer with God, though with *men*, perhaps they *may suffer*; we shall find if we look into Scripture, how that none have been more censured by *men*, than those who have been most approved of by God, but then all those censures and accusations have fallen to the ground, and come to no purpose. Ahab accused *Elijah* for a *Disturber and Troubler of Israel*; *Tertullus* accused *Paul* for a *pestilent fellow*; The *Pharisees* accused *Christ* himself for a *Deceiver*, and one that had a *Devil*; and so of the rest: But what have all these Censures and Accusations come to at last, but the *shame* of those who have been the *Authors* of them, and have *offer'd* to prefer them?

There's hardly any good man, nor there's hardly any good *Action*, but it will come under the lash of the world one time or other; but as long in the mean time as any can approve themselves to God in their own *Consciences*, and to have *him* to justify them, and acquit them, they are well enough for *all that*. This is the sting and bitterness of an *Accusation*, when it finds somewhat in the party accused, as answerable to it; but take away this, and there's nothing at all in it. If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things; but if our heart condemn us not, then have we *confidence* towards God, which is the *chiefest confidence* of all; and this for the Accusation of Enemies.

Thirdly, For *Men themselves*; their own *misgivings* and jealousies, These shall not hurt them *neither*, Gods people, as they are subject to many prejudices and imputations from *others*; so they do *sometimes* lye under many hard misconstructions from *themselves*; sometimes through *Melancholly and Distemper*, which Satan abuses in them to that purpose; and sometimes from a withdrawing of the *Influences* of Gods Spirit from them, yea, sometimes also from a kind of *wilfulness and perverseness* of Spirit in *themselves*; who will needs be *worse* then they are, and take the *Devils* part against their own interest and advantage; for we are still commonly in the *Extreams*, either to see *no sin at all*, or to see more then *we should*; either to be *all Grace*, or to be *no Grace at all*: Now how shall any one lay any charge to Gods *Elect* in this respect also: How shall any one that's a *justified* person conclude himself to be a reprobate? Consider of *that* beloved, we are apt to think we may *make bold* with our selves; but give me leave to tell you this, that as we are *answerable* to God for those accusations which *we charge upon others*, so we are not unaccountable for those *Censures* which we pass by upon our selves; and as God will *punish* us for *self-flattery*, so he will not thank us for *self-slander*. Indeed this *latter* is *that* which but very few persons are guilty of, who rather offend on the *other hand*; but yet some there are that do, and it is a very *hainous* offence in them to do it. It is a great piece of *peevishness* in any, when they will rather give way to some dark and *sullen humour* in them, than to the Testimony of the Spirit of God himself witnessing

nessing to them; yea, 'tis a wonderful unthankfulness in them to deny the work of Gods Grace in their hearts, upon every light and easie occasion, as to the prejudice of their *Eternal Condition*.

It's one thing for a man to examine his Condition; and it is another thing for him to question it. Gods Children both may and ought very frequently to inquire into their *Evidences*, and to see how the state stands betwixt God and their own Souls, especially as at any time they observe any failings or miscarriages in themselves; but yet they may not upon every turn conclude themselves to be in a state of wrath, or despair of Gods favour towards them, which according as the Sin may be, may prove to be a greater sin, than the sin it self, which caused them to do so. God would have us to think of our selves, as we are, and no otherwise, to be humbled for our failings; to acknowledge our Graces, and to judge aright of our Conditions: Where Gods Children do at any time through Temptation and Satan's malice; do the contrary; yet it shall not substantially prejudice their Salvation in the latter end; which shall notwithstanding stand firm, and impregnable. Who shall? that is not men themselves and their own mis-giving Consciences, &c.

Fourthly and lastly, Being justified by God, the Law cannot accuse us neither; This we may add to the other. The Law it has an accusing and condemning power with it. Job. 5. 45. sayes our Saviour there to the Jews, Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father, There is one that accuseth you, Even Moses in whom ye trust. Moses accused them: How could that possibly be? as who was dead long before? Yes, Moses in Moses's writings. Moses, that is, the Law of Moses, which was exhibited and ministred by him. This it did accuse those who were guilty of the Transgressions of it, and so still may be able to do. There is a Clamorous voyce in the Law, when it is brought home to a guilty Conscience, and applied thereunto: Indeed of it self, it sayes nothing, where it is not attended to; but otherwise hear what it sayes, Galat. 3. 10, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Book of the Law to do them. Now this Sentence and Curse, it does not reach the Children of God who are justified by Christ, as it follows in the 13th Verse of the same Chapter, Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a curse for us: We are redeemed from the accusation of the Law. Thus we see how in all these particulars, there's none to frame an Accusation against us: As our blessed Saviour to the Woman in the Gospel; when he ask'd her, where are those thine Accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? and she answered, No man Lord: And he said, Neither do I condemn thee, Joh. 8. 10, 11. Even so may it be said of all those who are the Elect and Faithful of God: They have no body thus far to condemn them, as they are not condemn'd but approved by him, and stand right in his sight: That's the first Emphasis of this Question; Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? That is indeed, Who can? It is in a manner Impossible, and that as we have heard upon a threefold account; because there is nothing to accuse them of, none to accuse them to, no body to make or to frame any Accusation against them.

Secondly, Who shall? That is, Who may? It is that which is unwarrantable, and there's two things also in this: First, It is a *pragmatical* business;

business; and secondly, it is an *Injurious*. It is that which a man has nothing to do withall; and it is that, wherein he *does amiss* in doing of it. First, It is a *pragmatical* business, for any to accuse those whom God does acquit, they meddle with that which they have nothing to do withall; for God he is both the *Creditor*, and the *Judge*, and so where he does justifie, what has any to do to condemn?

First, He is the *Creditor*, and to whom the Debt does properly belong; now if he be pleased to remit it, what has any other to do with it? *The Debtor is a Servant to the Creditor*, as Solomon tells us; *Now who art thou* (sayes S. Paul) *that judgest another mans Servant? To his own Master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand*, Rom. 14. 4. Those that accuse Gods Elect, they meddle with another mans Servant; for God is the *Creditor*.

Secondly, God is also the *Judge*, and so it is *pragmaticalness* in that respect also; when the *Judge* has absolved any person, a *stander by* is not concern'd in it, so as to trouble himself about it; but is to submit to the *sentence of the Court*; and so it is likewise here in this *Divine Absolution*; for any to do otherwise, it is *pragmatical*.

But then also Secondly, It is *injurious*, for any to accuse any man whom the *Law* has already absolved, it is in it self matter of *Accusation*, and is liable to *exception*. And so is it for any to accuse them whom God has discharg'd; It is *injurious* both to *God Himself* who is the *Judge*, and has *past* the Sentence of Absolution; and it is likewise *injurious* to the *persons* themselves, who are absolved by him; and so every way illegal, and unwarrantable. That's the second, *Who shall?* that is, *Who may?*

Thirdly and lastly, *Who shall?* That is, *Who dare?* It is *unsafe and dangerous*; those that go about to charge or accuse those who are Gods Children, they venture upon a very *hazardous* business, and such as may prove at last very *troublesome*, and prejudicial to themselves. And so there's a great deal of *rashness*, and *presumption* in it. For a man to lay any false accusation upon the *meanest* Subject in a Kingdom, it were that which he were *answerable* for, and he might come off very difficultly about it, but to charge a *Princes favourite*, that would be counted more an high presumption indeed, and unsafe for any that should do it, why this is the case now, as to those that charge the *Servants of God*, and that lay hard imputations upon them. They accuse *Gods Elect*, who are his *choice and peculiar* people, his *Favourites*, and such as he esteems of: And therefore it concerns them to take heed herein what they do.

We know how God took up Aaron and Miriam, for their charging and accusing of Moses, and speaking reproachfully of him, *How were ye not afraid* (sayes he) *to speak against my Servant Moses*, in Numb. 12. 8. And so in like manner will he take up any others besides that shall deal so with those persons who are approved and justified by him: He will call them to account for all their hard censures upon them; as we may see how he did with *Job's Friends* for their censures upon him. He was so angry with them, as that he would not hear them, but made them to be beholding to *Job* himself to pray to him for them, in Job 42. ver. 7, 8. He said that they had not spoken of himself the thing that was right, because they had spoken against *Job*. The

The sum of all comes to this, That therefore all men take heed how they lay loads upon the Servants of God in this particular; take heed of *upbraiding* them after *Conversion* with their *former Conversation*; for this is, as *Beza* said well, to one that did so *with him*, to *envy* them the Grace of *Christ*; yea, it is in a manner to reverse and nullifie the *sentence of God himself*.

Take heed likewise of any rash and uncharitable censure of them, which many sometimes are apt to do upon every occasion; ye know what even *Balaam* himself once said upon a like occasion, *How shall I curse whom God has not curs'd? Or how shall I despise whom the Lord hath not defied?* Even so it may be said *here*; How shall they charge whom God has not charg'd? Or how shall they condemn whom the Lord has not condemn'd; which to do, were no other in effect, then to charge, and condemn *God himself*, who is interested in the reproaches of his people; And he that reproves God, let him answer it, *Job. 40. 2.* So much for that, and so for this whole Verse, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God that justifieth.*

A a a a S E R M O N



S E R M O N XXXIX.

R O M. 8. 34.

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

There's no such lovely and glorious fight in all the World, as of a Christian in the full sail and flight of Faith, wherein he carries all before him, and triumphs over every thing which seems to stand in opposition against him; whether on the one hand, the evil of Punishment; or on the other hand, the evil of Sin; each of which are here exhibited to us in this present Scripture. Our business at this present, as it is here propounded and laid before us, is his triumph over the evil of sin; and that as to a double notion or reference of it: The one as to matter of Accusation, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God that justifieth. And the other as to the matter of Condemnation; Who shall condemn? It is Christ, &c. The former of these was that which we spoke to, and dispatcht the last day out of the 33. verse of this Chapter. The latter is that which we are to speak to with God's assistance at this present time out of this verse which I have now read unto you.

IN the Text it self there are two general Parts considerable of us: First, The Priviledge mention'd. Secondly, The Confirmation of this Priviledge. The Priviledge mention'd, that we have intimated in these words, *Who shall condemn?* The Confirmation or Argument to inforce it, that is taken from a four-fold Mystery or Article of our Christian Faith: First, From the death of Christ; *It is Christ that died.* Secondly, From the Resurrection of Christ; *Yea, rather that is risen again.* Thirdly, From the Ascension of Christ, or continued Exaltation; *Who is even at the right hand of God.* And lastly, From the Intercession of Christ; *Who also maketh Intercession for us.* These four distinct Points of Faith, and Articles of Christian Religion, do evince and clear this Truth, That Gods Children are free from condemnation.

We begin with the first of these parts, viz. The Priviledge it self which is here mention'd, and that is *Believers freedom from Condemnation*, propounded for greater emphasis in the form of a question, *Who shall*

con-

condemn ? which (to take it in the full notion of it) hath two things considerable in it. The one is the *state* of a Christian, and the other is the *spirit* of a Christian. The *state* of a Christian, that is a *state of safety*, implied in the *matter* of the words, *None shall be able to condemn him.* The *spirit* of a Christian, that's a *spirit of triumph*, imply'd in the *form* of the words, *Who shall condemn ?* as bidding defiance to any that should offer to undertake it.

First, We will look upon these words as they do present to us the *state* of a Christian, in the *matter* and *substance* of them ; *Who shall condemn ?* that is, indeed *none shall condemn.* Those who are God's *Elec't*, which were mention'd in the verse before, as none shall be able to *accuse* them, so none shall be able to *condemn* them. They are such persons as are exempt from condemnation ; that is, from being adjudged to eternal wrath and *punishment in Hell* ; they are *wholly incapable* of it. This is the general Doctrine of the *Scripture* in sundry places of it ; we have it here in the very front and beginning of this present Chapter before us, *Rom. 8. 1, There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, &c.* And it is futable to other places besides, as *Esay 50. 9. Behold the Lord God will help me, who is he that shall condemn me ?* *Joh. 3. 18, He that believeth on him is not condemned.* And *Joh. 5. 24, Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.*

Now besides the grounds of this truth which follow afterwards in the Text, and which in their place we shall come unto, there is this *account* which may be given hereof unto us : First, The *certainty* and *infallibility* of *Gods Decree and eternal Purpose* : They are call'd *Gods Elec't* in the verse preceding : Now the *Election* it must needs obtain, and can by no means be *frustrated* or *disappointed*. Those who are *elect'd to salvation*, they cannot fall into *Condemnation*, which is quite opposite and contrary thereunto. Now thus it is with all *true Believers*, *God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ*, sayes the *Apostle Paul*, in *1 Thess. 5. 9.* And *Ephes. 1. 11, We have obtained an Inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him, &c.*

Secondly, *God's Children cannot be condemned, because they cannot be accused* : Here's one question following upon another ; *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elec't ?* that is, no body ; therefore, *Who shall condemn ?* that is, no body neither. Those that cannot be charged, they cannot be judged.

Thirdly, *Because they are justified ; It is God that justifies them*, therefore as who can *accuse* them ? so who can *condemn* them ? He that *justifies them now* in this life, he will *absolve them hereafter* in the life to come, and will put them into the *possession of that Inheritance* which is prepared for them, as is signified to us in the carriage of the *last Judgment*, in *Matth. 25. 34, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* *God's Children are elect'd, not accused, justified ; and therefore shall not be condemned.*

The consideration of this Point makes much for the comfort and happiness of the Children of God, and serves to make us in love with such

a state and condition as that is. What blessed persons are those, whom it thus happens unto, so as to be freed from condemnation! How much is the poorest Christian above the *greatest worldling* that is! Take a *wicked and carnal man*, who is as yet but in the *state of nature*; and he is for the present in a *state of wrath*, and every minute ready to drop *even into Hell it self*. Though he have all the world at will, and what-ever his heart can wish or desire here *below*; yet he is a wretched and miserable person, because he is liable and exposed to condemnation. But now a *Child of God*, and *true Believer*, who is regenerate and born again, he is thus far happy, as he is freed from this in the midst of all other evils besides, which he may satisfy and comfort himself in, what-soever God may do with him besides; yet he will be sure not to *condemn him*, nor to suffer him to *perish eternally*.

Nay farther, what-ever he does to him, it is in a manner to keep him from this: All God's Corrections of his Children here in this life, they are to preserve them from damnation in another, as it is in *1 Cor. 11. 32*, *When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we might not be condemned with the world*: That we may not run into the same excess of riot with other men, and therefore we should the more patiently bear them, and submit unto them. And thus much of this passage in the *matter* of it, as it does express to us the *state* of a Christian, which is a state of special safety and preservation; *Who shall condemn him?* i. e. indeed *none* shall condemn him.

The second is, as it expresses to us the *spirit* of a Christian, and that is a spirit of Triumph and Exultation; *Who shall condemn him?* as defying any that should undertake it, or go about it. As a Christian is freed from condemnation in the thing it self, so he is also oftentimes freed from the *fear* of it in his *own Conscience*, and is enabled by a *spirit of Faith* to triumph over all those that shall threaten him with it, as *St. Paul* does here in this place. And it is good for him in an holy manner to *cherish* and nourish such thoughts as these are in himself, not easily to let go his hold, or lose his ground, or suffer himself to be baffled or dismayed in this particular.

First, A Christian should labour to be upon *good grounds himself*, as to his state and condition in Grace; and then he should endeavour to *assert* them, and to stand to them *against all opposition*; not too readily to hearken to the suggestions and temptations of *Satan*, who would fain discourage him, and draw him to despair; nor yet too hastily to close with the *jealousies and misgivings* of his own heart, which sometimes in a *dissemper* may represent sad things unto him. And so now I have done with the *first general part* of the Text, which is the Priviledge it self here mention'd in the form of a question; *Who shall condemn?* that is, *none* shall condemn God's Elect.

The second is the *confirmation* of this Priviledge, from the *several Arguments* which are brought to inforce it; And they are (as I say) taken from four Articles of our *Christian Faith*: We will view them in their several order as they lie before us.

The first is, The *death of Christ*; *It is Christ that died*. Christ's dying for Believers does infer their freedom from condemnation: Those for whom *Christ died*, they cannot be *damn'd*; but Christ died for all his Elect,

Elect, *Ergo*, they cannot, &c. This is the force of the Argument, and it is sutable to the general Doctrine of Scripture, Rom. 4. 25, *Who was delivered for our offences*: Rom. 5. 8, *Whiles we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us*. And 1 Pet. 3. 18, *Christ hath once suffered for Sins, the Just for the Unjust (that he might bring us to God) being put to death in the Flesh, but quickned in the Spirit*. Where the death of Christ is still mention'd with this reference in it.

Now the strength of this Argument it does depend upon a three-fold consideration: First, The nature and quality of the death of Christ it self. Secondly, The Interest and Propriety which all Believers have in this death. And thirdly, The justice of God himself in reference to both.

First, The death of Christ does free God's Children from Condemnation, upon account of the nature and quality of it, consider'd in it self as most available and sufficient to such a purpose as this is.

This it is (to speak distinctly of it) again in a two-fold respect: First, From the dignity of his Person; *It is Christ*. And secondly, From the fulness of his satisfaction; *It is Christ that died*: There's somewhat in both.

First, The Dignity of his Person; *It is Christ*: If it had been any other Person besides who had undertaken to reconcile us to God, and to free us from Condemnation, we might have notwithstanding doubted of it, and call'd it into question: But now it is *Jesus that hath delivered us from the wrath to come*, 1 Theff. 1. 10. And *it is Christ that hath died for us*, as it is here exprest; and therefore we may be confident of it. It was not an ordinary Person that took our Nature upon him, and died for our Redemption, but the Lord Christ Himself; and the Scripture delights to set him out to us in the excellency of his Person, with this reference. Thus Dan. 9. 24, 25, *The most holy shall be anointed, or the holy of holies to seal up iniquity, and to make reconciliation for sins, and the Messiah shall be cut off*. In Phil. 2. 6. *Who being in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet humbled himself, &c.* In 1 Cor. 2. 8, *They crucified the Lord of Glory*. In Col. 1. 14, *In whom we have Redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins; who is the Image of the invisible God, the first born of every Creature*. See here what expressions are used to illustrate the Dignity of the Person that suffer'd for us; *The Messiah, the Holy of Holies, in the form of God, equal with God, the Lord of Glory, the Image of God, the first born of every Creature*. And such Titles and Appellations as these; this is one thing which has an influence upon this business, viz. The Dignity of the Person.

The second is, The fulness of his satisfaction; Those for whom Christ hath died, they cannot be condemned, because Christ by dying for them hath taken away all manner of guilt and condemnation from them. By his once offering up of himself for our Sins upon the Cross, he hath made a full attonement and expiation for us. Therefore he is call'd *the Lamb of God which taketh away the Sins of the world*, Joh. 1. 29. And he is said by one offering to have perfected for ever them that are sanctified, Heb. 10. 14. He hath fully satisfied the Law in our behalf, both as to his Passive Obedience and to his Active, and so thereby freed his Elect. That's
one

one ground of this inference, and force of this Argument here before us. *Christ hath died*, therefore none shall condemn the Children of God, viz. The nature and quality of the death of Christ it self: First, In the Dignity of his *Person*. And secondly, In the *fulnes and sufficiency* of his satisfaction.

The second is, The *Interest and Propriety* which all Believers have in this death, in these words, *It is Christ that died*; as they lie here in *this Text*, they are to be taken not only *absolutely*, but *relatively*: He died; that is, he died for his *Elect*, whom he had mention'd in the verse before, and they are such as have *interest* in his death, and so have the comfort and benefit of it. Christ died as a *publick Person*, and so the *virtue* of his death extends to all those that have a share in it. This is that which all true Believers have, they are such as for *whom Christ hath died*. And that again in a two-fold Explication: First, As to his own *purpose and intention*. And secondly, As to their own *improvement and application*.

First, In the intention of *Christ*; He hath *designed* his death to be *effectual* to all his *Elect*, and did with a *special respect* unto them lay down his life. These who were *thus given* to him, he hath *given Himself* for them; and so they must needs have benefit by Him. He hath *applied his death* unto them for reconciliation and eternal life, and so they cannot be deprived of it: *Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me*, &c. Joh. 17. 24.

Secondly, As to their own *Improvement and Application*; They have *laid hold* on this death of Christ, and so made it *their own*, and the *virtue and efficacy* of it. As Christ has *offer'd* Himself to them for *Salvation*, so they have *accepted* of him in this Offer, and that upon his own *terms and conditions*, and so they come to have an *interest and propriety* in it upon that account, which is the second ground for the force of this Argument: Christ hath died, therefore none shall condemn us, because this death of his is properly *ours*.

The third and last is, The *Justice* of God Himself in reference to both. Seeing Christ's death is sufficiently *satisfactory*, and all Believers have a share in this death; therefore it does not consist with God's *Justice* to expose them to eternal condemnation, because he will not exact *twice* the payment of *one and the same debt*: It is satisfied in the *Surety*, and therefore it cannot in justice be required of the *principal Debtor*; *The Judge of all the World must needs do right*.

The Application of this Point to our selves comes to this:

First, It meets with all those who, together with the *Merits of Christ*, joyn the satisfaction of Saints in the *work of Redemption*, as necessary to the satisfying of God's *Justice*, and to the preventing of the *punishment of Gods people*; such as these they do absolutely nullifie and make void this *reasoning* of the Apostle. For he sayes, *It is Christ that died*, therefore *none* can condemn them. They say, Though Christ hath died, yet if others had not died also with him, they might be condemn'd for all that.

Secondly, This teaches us all to labour to *get* and to *find* an interest *our selves* in the death of Christ, so that we may be able to say for our particulars, That *Christ hath dyed for us*; for they that cannot do so, they

they shall have no *comfort* at all from this Conclusion. It is not to be taken *absolutely* and indefinitely, without any limitation, as many foolish and ignorant people sometimes use to take it; Christ died, therefore who can condemn? Christ is in the general a *Saviour*, and therefore they shall be saved: No, but to be able to say upon good grounds, that Christ died *for them*; to be able to say, as the Apostle *Paul* sometime of himself, *Who loved me, and gave himself for me*, in Gal. 2. 20. If Christ died, and did not die *for thee*, thou art never a whit the nearer *Salvation*. And if Christ be a *Saviour*, and not *thy* *Saviour*, thou art still *liable to Condemnation*; therefore we must carry this dying here in the Text to its word of *propriety* which follows in the close of the verse, and that is, *For us*; which has a reference not only to his *Intercession* (as it is there *immediately* conjoyn'd with it) but as well to all the others there mention'd. And so amongst the rest to his *death*, who rose *for us*, ascended for us, intercedes *for us*, dyed *for us*. And because it was *for us* that he died, therefore shall we *for his sake* be freed from *Condemnation*.

The connexion of these two together in this present Context, *Gods Elect*, and *Christs dying* as refer'd *unto them*, seems to give us *some good hint* of the efficacy and extent of *Christs death*, both in the *Latitude* of it, and in the *Restriction*. In the *Latitude*, as it reaches to *all the Elect*: And in the *Restriction*, as it reaches *only to the Elect*.

First, For the *Latitude*; *Who shall condemn Gods Elect*? *It is Christ that died*. This shews that he died *for them*, or otherwise this reasoning had been impertinent and insignificant. That's a thing therefore to be supposed, and premised, and taken for granted; *All the Elect have share in Christs death*.

Secondly, For the *Restriction*, *That he died for them alone*, that's intimated and implied here likewise from this Connexion. I prove it thus, The *Elect* cannot be damn'd, because Christ died *for them*; this is the *Apostles Argument*. Now if those for whom Christ died might be damn'd notwithstanding; or if those which shall be damned had Christ dying for them. This Argument of the Apostle were *frivolous*, and wholly inconsequent; so then because *all men* are not freed from *Condemnation*, but only the *Elect*; Christ did not die *for all men* efficaciously, but for the *Elect* only. This is the scope and drift of the very Text: And so much for *that*, namely, the first Argument to prove *Gods Children* free from *Condemnation*, taken from the *death of Christ*; *It is Christ that died*.

The second is taken from *his Resurrection*; *Yea, rather that is risen again*. It is not my purpose here to enter into the common place of *Christ's Resurrection*, or to handle the Doctrine at large, which I have done formerly upon other occasions; but only to speak of it in that reference which it has in the Text. And there are two things here observable: First, The word of *Correction* or *Revocation*; *Yea, rather*. Secondly, The force of the Argument; *That is risen again*.

First, For the word of *Correction* or *Revocation*; *Yea, rather that he is risen*. This, it does not *gainsay* or *contradict* what he had said before: But only *adds* somewhat unto it, and puts a *special emphasis* upon it to draw our attention. It is true, that the *death of Christ* it is a *great mystery*

mystery of our Salvation; and such as we are *not lightly* or easily to pass over in our thoughts, or to let slip from us. But we are not to rest or to stay our selves here, but to pass from his *Death to his Resurrection*; to consider him, and look upon him, as *reviv'd and risen again*. And this especially we should look upon Christ chiefly and principally in the *mystery* of his Resurrection, and that upon a three-fold Consideration: First, In reference to the *mystery* it self. Secondly, In reference to Christ Himself. And thirdly, In reference to *us* our selves.

First, In reference to the *mystery* and thing it self, as a more *excellent and transcendent* Dispensation. For Christ to *die*, and to be laid in the *grave*, and there to rest; this it might carry some kind of outward meanness, and baseness, and contemptibleness with it, which made the *very preaching* of it to be so offensive to some kind of people; *Unto the Jews a Stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks Foolishness*: This was the *preaching* of Christ crucified. But now for Christ to be risen again, this is such a glorious *mystery*, as dazzles the most curious Eyes, and affects all men that beheld it even with *admiration*.

Secondly, In reference to Christ Himself; *Rather as risen again*, as that which is the greater Honour and Dignity to Him; for hereby was there a discovery of his *Godhead and Divine Nature*. He was declared to be the *Son of God with power*, according to the *spirit of holiness* by the *Resurrection from the dead*, Rom. 1. 4. Christ by his rising again, was declared to be the true *Son of God*, and so consequently his absolute Power and Dominion which he had over all things; Rom. 4. 9, *For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of Dead and Living*.

Thirdly, In reference to our selves, as of greatest use and improvement to us: For Christ's Resurrection, it is the ground and foundation of *ours*; and so of all other comfort which belongs unto us. This for the first particular here considerable, which is the word of Correction; *Tea, rather*.

The second is the force of the Argument, and the dependance or influence which it hath upon the foregoing Conclusion; Gods Children cannot be condemn'd, *because* Christ is risen. The *Resurrection of Christ* is an evidence and assurance to us of our freedom from all Condemnation. This is the very scope and drift of the *Holy Ghost* here in this place, and it is further express'd unto us in Rom. 4. 25. Where it is said, *That he rose again for our justification*. There was a double Justification, which was purchas'd by Christs Resurrection: First, A Justification of *Him*. And secondly, A Justification of *us*: A justification of *Him*, that He was indeed *very God*, in that place of the *Romans* before alledged, *Declared to be the Son of God, &c.* Therefore he is said by the Apostle to be *justified in or by the Spirit*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. And Psal. 2. 7, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*. It is not so much to be understood concerning the *eternal Generation* of Christ before the *World began*, as concerning the particular manifestation of it. Now at this time, and after this manner: First, In the day of his *Incarnation*, but especially in the day of his *Resurrection*, as we find it expressly to be interpreted by the Apostle, *Act. 13. 32, 33*.

But then secondly, It was a justification of *us*, that he had fully satisfied for us. The discharge of the Surety was a Declaration, that the Debt was paid. Christ's Resurrection it was no part of his satisfaction; only it was an evidence of it: As the stamp upon the Coin, it makes it not Gold, but currant. Christ by his Resurrection shewed that he had conquer'd all, and therefore He left the Grave-cloathes behind him.

The Use of all this to our selves may be to teach us to study and meditate upon this great and excellent mystery; to labour to know Christ, and the power and efficacy of his Resurrection, and to comfort our selves from the thoughts and reflexions upon it: If Christ were not risen, as the Apostle speaks, our Faith were vain: we were yet in our sins, 1 Cor. 15. 17. But now being risen, our Faith is firm, and our sins shall now have no advantage against us. What-ever scandal may appear in Christ's dying, it is taken away in Christ rising again. And that's the second Argument to prove Believers freedom from Condemnation, taken from Christ's Resurrection.

The third is, Which is taken from his Ascension, or continued Exaltation; Who is even at the right hand of God. God being a Spirit, hath properly no right hand in Him: But it is a metaphorical expression taken from the manner of men; and more particularly of Princes, who express their respects to those who are in special favour with them, by setting them at their right hand; as we read in the carriage of King Solomon to his Mother Bathsheba, 1 King. 2. 19. Being applied to Christ, in respect of God, it carries a double emphasis with it: First, As a signification of Dignity. And secondly, As a signification of Power; each are in this expression.

First, When it is said here, That Christ sitteth at Gods right hand, there is hereby signified the special Advancement of the Humane Nature of Christ to an unspeakable height of Glory. I say, of his Humane Nature, for that is that which is here specially intended, though in a sense it is also applicable to his Divine: Christ's Humane Nature was herein especially advanced. This is that which we have signified in sundry places of Scripture, as Ephes. 1. 20, 21, According to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all Principalities and Powers. So Heb. 8. 1, We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the Majesty in the Heavens.

There's a two-fold ground for the Advancement of Christ's Humane Nature after this manner:

First, The hypostatical Union; i.e. The Union of the Godhead and Manhood in one Person. Forasmuch as the Manhood of Christ was in his first Conception and Incarnation joyn'd in one Person with the Godhead; it was requisite that now in his Ascension he should sit at God's right hand. As the nearer that any one is in blood to the Person of a Prince, so much the higher is he in place above all other Subjects. Take the Manhood or Humane Nature consider'd in it self, and in abstracto, so it was inferior to the Angels, and lower then the Nature of those heavenly Spirits. But take it in Concreto, as it is in Christ, and joyn'd in one Person with the Divine Nature, and so it deserves to be advanced above all Created Excellencies whatsoever.

The second ground of this Advancement is taken from the fulness and compleatness of *Christ's Obedience* ; He deserved now to *sit down* at the right hand of God, because he had fully finish'd his Work. *Sitting*, it is a *posture of rest*, and an *indulgence* to men after labour : When men have done that particular work and business which was required of them, then they have liberty given them to *sit down*, and to repose themselves. Even so it was now with Christ, having finished the Work of our Redemption, He *sits down at the right hand of God*, as a *consequent* of his labour, and a *testimony* of the *consummation* of it. And so the *Apostle Himself* seems to give us an account of it, *Heb. 1. 3, Who being the brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person, and upholding all things by the word of his Power : when he had by himself purged our sins, sate down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.* Where we have both these grounds together which we have now mention'd, for this advancement of the *Humane Nature of Christ* : First, From the excellency of his Person, in these words, *Who being the brightness of his Glory, and express Image, &c.* Secondly, From the compleatness of his Obedience in these ; *After that he had by Himself purged our sins.* And so *Phil. 2. 8, 9, He became obedient, wherefore, &c.*

This is the sum of the business, That *Christ sits at God's right hand*, as a testimony of the fulness of his Redemption, and the compleatness of his Sacrifice for us. Wherein there is a perfect difference betwixt Him and the *Levitical Priests*, as we have it most excellently set forth unto us in that full and eminent Scripture, *Heb. 10. 11, 12, 13, 14, Every Priest standeth daily ministring, and offering oftentimes the same Sacrifices, which can never take away sins : But this man after he had offered one Sacrifice for sins, for ever sate down on the right hand of God, expecting till his Enemies be made his Footstool.* For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, whereof the Holy Ghost is also a witness unto us. This is the difference now betwixt Christ and the Priests under the Law, That for them they had never done their work, or brought it to an end, but it was still short and imperfect ; therefore they continually repeated it, and went over the same Sacrifices again and again : And they stood daily ministring ; as daily, so likewise standing, which is a posture of service and subjection. But Christ he offer'd but one Sacrifice once upon the Cross ; which being perfected and finished by him, he was thereupon taken up into Glory, and sits at God's right hand, as equal with him. And that's the first emphasis in this expression, to wit, as it is a signification of *Dignity and special Advancement.*

The second is, As it is a signification of *Power and special Administration.* The *right-hand* in the Language of Scripture is a Pledge, and intimation hereof. Thus *Luke 22. 69, Hereafter shall the Son of man sit at the right hand of the power of God.* The right hand of power, because the *right hand* is that which is most expedite and active ; therefore it serves for the setting forth of thus much unto us : So that for Christ to be at God's right hand in this respect is no more but this, namely, to be indued with special Power and Authority for the Administration of that special Kingdom which is committed unto him. Thus *Matth. 28. 18, All power is given unto me both in heaven and earth, 1 Cor. 15. 25, All things are put under his feet.* And *Rev. 19. 16, He hath this*

Name

Name written upon his thigh, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; which he does express both in gathering and governing his Chosen, and in quelling and subduing his Enemies. Thus we see in what respects Christ is said to sit at Gods right hand.

Now the proper improvement of this Doctrine, is the connexion which it hath here in this Text, which is principally to be regarded by us. Christ is now at the right hand of God, who therefore shall now condemn? Seeing Christ is now Himself even at the right hand of his Father, therefore none shall be able to condemn those who are his Members: therefore none shall be able to accuse them, or lay any thing to their charge. As this is confirm'd and ratified by his Resurrection, and coming out of the Grave, as we shewed out of the former branch; so it is likewise further assured from his Ascension, and further Exaltation, as we have it here in this. Here's an unanswerable evidence, that all's well betwixt God and the Elect; forasmuch as he who is their Surety is now set down at his rest, in testimony of the compleatness of his Work, which he should not have had the Honour to have done, if he had not fulfilled it. This seems to be the scope of that place, in Job. 16. 10. Where it is said, That the Holy Spirit, the blessed Comforter, when he comes, he shall convince the World of Righteousness, because Christ is gone to his Father, &c. Christ he is gone to his Father: And from hence it does appear and is manifest, That there is a Righteousness procured to his people, even the Righteousness of Christ. Therefore it is added also, That now ye shall see him no more; that is, in that manner as ye have seen him heretofore in the dayes of his Flesh, suffering and satisfying for Sin; but now advanced and exalted in Glory. And so as not to return again to his former Work, as if he had not before fully finished and performed it: His Ascension proves his Satisfaction.

What a comfortable Doctrine is this now to every Believer against all the Discouragements and Temptations which he lies under. His own Spirit is ready to be dejected and cast down in him, from the Infirmities which compass him about, and the difficulties which he finds in holy Duties, and doing of good; yea, but Christ his Surety he hath done them for him, and exactly perform'd what-ever was required of him.

So Satan, he is ready to cast in his Temptations, and fiery Darts also, whereby he labours to bring the Children of God what he can to despair; but there is a Power in Christ for the extinguishing and quenching of them all. He that hath overcome Death and the Grave, and is gloriously ascended, and gone up into Heaven it self, what cannot he do now for the good and comfort of his Elect? He that has overcome his own Temptations, he will help them to overcome theirs.

Again, Christ is even at the right hand of God, therefore who can condemn? It holds good upon this account, of the suitability and conformity which is necessary in the Members to the Head: An elect Christian he is in Heaven already, therefore he cannot be condemned. How is he already in Heaven? because Christ is there already before him. And he is there in his Head, according to that expression of the Apostle, Ephes. 2. 6, He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Look as Christ Himself cannot be

condemn'd, as sitting at Gods right hand; so a Believer cannot be condemn'd neither, forasmuch as he is a *Member of Christ*: To think that a Believer should fall away, and perish, and be damn'd, is to pull Christ Himself out of Heaven; and he that is able to do the *one*, he may conclude upon the *other*. That's the third *Argument* here considerable, which is taken from *Christs Ascension and continued Advancement*.

The fourth and last, is taken from his *Intercession*, in these words, *Who also maketh intercession for us*. This we have signified likewise in *Heb. 7. 25.* where it is said, *That he ever liveth to make intercession for his people*. This Intercession of Christ (for the right understanding of it) does not consist in a formal *prostrating* of the *Body* of Christ, but especially in these following particulars.

First, In his *appearing* and *presenting* of Himself for us to his Father in both his *Natures*. This we have plainly express'd unto us in *Heb. 9. 24.* *For Christ is not entred into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true: but into Heaven it self, now to appear in the presence of God for us*. Look as in the Courts of men, there is usually answer made by the Attorney, who appears in the behalf of the Person cited, and speaks for him; Even so does the Lord Jesus Christ sitting at the right hand of God *appear* in the behalf of all his Members, to satisfy the justice of God concerning those Complaints and Accusations which are brought against them. This was shadowed out to us in the Dispensations of the *Levitical Law*, *Exod. 39. 7.* where it was the custom and manner of the *High Priest* to go into the *Holy of Holies* with the *Names* of the Children of *Israel* written in *precious Stones*, for a *Memorial* of them, that he might remember them to God in his prayers. And thus now in like manner, Christ Jesus being entred into the *Holiest* of all, which is Heaven it self, does there present to his Father the Names of all his *elect Children*, and makes remembrance of them, that he may obtain reconciliation for them, and free them from condemnation.

As for us our selves, we have so much sin and guiltiness upon us, and defilement in us, as that we know not how with any face to make appearance in the presence of God; now therefore does Christ himself, who is our Surety, appear in our stead. He that has paid the Debt for us, is not ashamed to shew his Head; but does *boldly and confidently* present Himself in our behalf: Here I am as the Surety, and Advocate, and Mediator for all mine Elect; what-ever thou hast against any of them, charge it upon me. As he was ready at first to *undertake* the Work, *Lo I come to do thy will O God, &c.* So he is as ready now to own it, and to stand by it, being undertaken by Him. That's the first explication of this Intercession, *viz.* by way of Appearance.

Secondly, As Christ does *appear* in Heaven for us, so He does likewise further urge, and exhibit, and present to God the Father the *rigor and merit*, and efficacy of that Sacrifice which he once made on *Earth* for us. Christ deals with God now in a way of justice and *equal demand*; that whereas he has paid the price, and made full satisfaction to Him, that now therefore He may obtain that of Him which he bargain'd and agreed with Him for, which is the Salvation of the Souls of his people: And that's a second Explication.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, He does also *actually* apply this his Death, and Merit, and Satisfaction to *Believers themselves*: As Paul in the behalf of Onesimus, *Set this upon my account.* As Christ stands upon his *own price*, the justifying and maintaining of that as *full and sufficient*, so he does likewise make over this his price and payment to the *benefit of the faithful*. He perpetually *wills and desires* that his Satisfaction should be imputed to all whom his Father hath given unto him: By which *will* we are said to be *sanctified*, through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all, Heb. 10. 10.

Fourthly and lastly, Christ is said to *intercede for us*, in all those particular Suits and Requests which he puts up in our behalf. As for the giving of the Holy Ghost, Joh. 14. 17, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that may abide with you for ever, even the spirit of truth, &c.*

So likewise for our Union with the Father and Himself, Job. 17. 21, *I pray that they may be all one in us, &c.* Our communion with God, through his Spirit, is an effect of Christ's Intercession.

Again, Our *final perseverance* and continuance in good, Christ intercedes for this also; Job. 17. 11, *Holy Father, keep through thine own Name those whom thou hast given me.* And so Peter, *I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not,* Luke 22. 31, 32.

And lastly, Which is the business in hand, for their freedom from *eternal condemnation*, and participation of eternal Glory, Job. 17. 24, *That those whom thou hast given me be with me, &c.*

The Improvement of all comes to *this* (together with the fore-mention'd Arguments) that therefore the Children of God shall *never be condemned*: *Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that intercedes for us.* Our blessed Lord and Saviour has made this the great Request to his Father, that none of his Members should perish. And this Prayer of his it is most sure to take effect in sundry regards:

First, The *graciousness of his Person*, the Son of his love, and in whom he is well pleased: The Requests of such are available and efficacious.

Secondly, His qualification for this Work, and happy managing of it: He has all the Qualities and Properties of a good and powerful Advocate; He understands our Cause, He is faithful to it, He is industrious about it: He is always in the Judges presence, and *be ever liveth, &c.* as it is interpreted; *And therefore he is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him.*

All these things laid together, make much for the comfort of God's Children, and may serve to strengthen their Faith in this particular. If they be such as do truly repent of their sins, and hate them, and depart from, as none shall be able justly to charge them with them, so neither shall they ever hereafter be condemn'd for them. Here's a four-fold cord that is not easily broken, *Who shall lay, &c. Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*



SERMON XL.

R O M. 8. 35.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

It is the manner of those that are given to Challenges and Boastings in the World, that when they begin, they never have done, but go on from one thing to another; even sometimes to Vanity it self. And it is that which is no less observable, (although upon far better grounds) and to a great deal far better purpose in spiritual things: Where those who are the Servants of God, as the Church professes of her self, will boast of God all the day long. This is that which we may here take notice of in the Apostle Paul, who from triumphing first over sin, which is the sting of every Affliction, does afterwards most seasonably proceed to the triumphing over Affliction it self. He had triumph'd over sin in the 33. and 34. verse of this Chapter which have already been handled by us; Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth: Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died, &c. And he triumphs over Affliction here in this present verse, and so forward to the end of the Chapter.

IN the Text it self there are two general Parts considerable: First, A triumphant Question. Secondly, A satisfactory Answer or Reply to this Question. The *Question*, that's in the 34th verse. The *Answer*, that's in the 37th verse of this Chapter. Our business at this time is with the former, viz. the Question, which is here considerable of us two manner of wayes: First, In the general Proposition; *Who shall, &c.* Secondly, In the particular specification; *Shall Tribulation, &c.*

We begin with the first of these Branches, viz. The general Proposition; *Who shall separate us from the love of God? Who shall?* It is not said *what*, but *who*? Not *is*, but *is it*? Though the following instance be of things, not of persons; yet it is express personally, because that these things they do commonly do us hurt in the improvement of Persons, whether of Satan or wicked men, who are commonly instrumental hereunto. And

And for the love of Christ, it may be taken either *actively* or *passively*: *Actively*, for our love of Him; or *Passively*, for his love of us; which latter acceptance of it seems to be that which is here chiefly intended, as may appear both from the nature of the phrase, and from the coherence and scope of the Text. There is nothing which shall be able to separate Believers from this love of Christ, which again may be taken two manner of ways, and hath a double intimation with it: Either first of all, As to the thing it self; Who or what shall separate us from the love of Christ? that is, who shall take off Christs love from us? Or secondly, As to discovery and manifestation; Who or what shall separate us from the love of Christ? that is, which shall be a sufficient Argument to perswade us that Christ does not love us?

First of all, Let us look upon it in the thing it self; Who or what shall take off the love of Christ from us? that is, indeed nothing at all. There is no Person, or Condition, which can make Christ to be out of love with his people, or any way deprive them of that interest which they have in his affection. This is the part before us; No person; Who shall separate them? No condition; What shall separate them? Either of them are included in it.

First, No persons shall be able to do it; whether Satan or wicked men. These they do now and then attempt it; as they are out of God's love themselves, so they would fain make others so to, especially as any are better than others. And there are two ways especially whereby they do endeavour to do it; By *Accusation*, and by *Temptation*; but they shall prevail in neither.

First, Not by means of *Accusation*: *Accusation* is an expediate way to take off Affection; where any have a mind at any time to bring others out of favour with any, they think they cannot do it more easily then by fastning some evil censure or slander upon them. It was the course which Ziba took with Mephibosheth the Son of Jonathan, in reference to David. And it is the course which the Devil and his Instruments take with those which are faithful in reference to God: Satan he is the *Accuser* of the Brethren, and that sometimes even to God Himself; but it's all in conclusion to no purpose, and such as wherein at last he does not speed; as we may see in the case of Job, where when he was most busie to accuse him, God Himself stood most for him. And so Christ Himself, when the Pharisees began to accuse his Disciples to him, then did He take their part: *The Lord is on my side* (says David) *I will not fear what man can do unto me: The Lord taketh my part with them that help me, therefore shall I see my desire on them that hate me.* And St. Paul here in this very Chapter, verse 31. *If God be for us, who can be against us?* Now he is for all those that are his.

Secondly, As not by *Accusation*, so neither by *Temptation*: That's another desperate course whereby the Devil and devilish men labour to alienate God's affection from his people, by tempting them, and drawing them into sin. Thus it is said of Baalam, *That he taught Balack to cast a stumbling-block before the Children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto Idols, and to commit Fornication,* Rev. 2. 14. This, if any, were the likeliest way to speed in this business; but it shall not do for all that. For God does either graciously prevent his Children from being exposed

posed to Temptation, or he gives them strength and ability to resist it, as he recovers them, and delivers them from it. Though Satan buffets them, yet Gods Grace is sufficient for them: God does not despise his Children in their Temptations, as the Galatians did not Paul. Christ is a merciful High Priest, and forasmuch as Himself suffer'd being tempted, he is both able and ready to succour them that are tempted. That's one thing here considerable, Who shall be able to separate us? that is, no persons shall be able to do it.

Again, As no enemy or person, so further no state or condition, that shall not separate God's Children from his love; It is not only who shall separate, as it is in the expression. But what shall separate? as it is in the explication, Shall tribulation, or distress? &c. So that there is this also which now here comes in to be consider'd, and taken notice of by us, That there is no condition, though never so forlorn, that can make God to forsake his people: He loves and affects Children, even in the worst and saddest cases that are incident unto them, Psal. 94. 18, 19, *When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up. And in the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul: David, when he was nearest to danger, he was then nearest to favour.* So Esay 43. 1, 2, *Thus saith the Lord that created thee O Jacob, and he that formed thee O Israel: Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by Name, thou art mine. When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee, and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee: When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.* So Job 5. 19, *He shall deliver thee in six troubles, and in seven there shall no evil touch thee.* In six and in seven, that is, in many, whatsoever they be: All these places, and the like, do confirm thus much unto us, that it is not any afflicted condition which can remove God's love from his Children; He loves them under the greatest Distresses.

Now there's a various account which may be given hereof unto us. Ye may take it in these following particulars:

First, From God's unchangeableness, and the immutability of his own Nature consider'd in Himself: It cannot be, that those whom God loves, his love should be taken off from them, because it cannot be that God should alter in his own disposition: He abides faithful, and cannot deny Himself, 2 Tim. 2. 13. *And with him is no variableness, or shadow of turning,* Jam. 1. 17. *I the Lord change not, therefore ye Sons of Jacob are not consumed.* An unchangeable God must needs have an unchangeable love; all which is in him, or comes from him, being so far forth like Himself, and partaking of the constancy of his Nature, and his affection amongst the rest. It is said of our blessed Saviour, Job. 13. 1, *That having loved his own, he loved them to the end.* And Jer. 31. 3, *I have loved thee with everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness will I draw thee.* And Esay 54. 8, *I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee.* God's kindness, it is an everlasting kindness, as being founded upon the unchangeableness of his Nature.

Secondly, There is nothing which can separate the love of God from his Children, or which can separate his Children from his love; because this love of his it is not founded in any thing in themselves, or that belongs unto

unto them, but only in his own good will and pleaſure; If the Lord did therefore love his people, becauſe they were thus and thus accommodated; with *riches, or honours, or ſtrength*, or any ſuch *accompliſhment*, he would then alſo *ceafe* to love them, when that theſe were taken away from them; But now foraſmuch as his love is not founded in theſe, therefore is not ſeparable or moveable for the loſs of theſe: God does not love his Children, becauſe they are thus, and thus proſperous; and therefore he does not forbear to love them, becauſe they are thus and thus afflicted, as *Moses* tells the *Iſraelites*, Deut. 7:8, *The Lord did not ſet his love upon you, nor chuſe you, becauſe ye were more in number then any people (for ye were the feweſt of all people.) But becauſe the Lord loved you, &c.* Mark, The Lord loved you becauſe he loved you; and he that does ſo, can have nothing without himſelf to take off his love.

Thirdly, Gods love is *immoveable* as to any thing which may happen unto us; becauſe it was pitch'd upon us, before we were, or had any being. That love which is from *Eternity* in its *Original*, it muſt needs be to *Eternity* in its *Continuance*; as *Waters* that riſe as high as the *ſpring* from whence they flow. Now the love wherewith God hath loved us, it was before ever the world was created, *He has choſen us in Chriſt before the foundation of the world was laid*, as it is in *Eph. 1.4.* Therefore neither the world it ſelf, nor any thing in it can take it away: If God would not love his Children ſtill, what made him to love them all this while? If he would not ſtill love them with a love of *complaicency*, what made him then to love them with a love of *benevolence*? What ſuſtain'd and kept up his love for ſo many Ages and Generations as are paſt, that now it ſhould at length be removed? we muſt therefore ſtill remember the *Title* which is here mention'd in the Text, of Gods *Eleſt*, and that *Emphatically*, as who ſhall accuſe them, and who ſhall condemn them? So who ſhall ſeparate Gods love from them.

Fourthly and laſtly, There is no removal or taking off of the love of God from his people, in regard of the conveyance of it to them, and the perſons in whom it is laid; and that is in his *Son Jeſus Chriſt*, Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? Not only taken *ſubjeſtively* for the perſon himſelf that loves us; but alſo as taken *derivatively* for the perſon in whom we are loved. All Gods love to his Children it is founded and laid in *Chriſt*, as we find it afterwards expreſt in the Verſe that follows, where we ſhall have more occaſion to ſpeak of it, in the cloſe of the Chapter. Shall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God which is in *Chriſt Jeſus our Lord*, *Eph. 6.* It is ſaid he hath made us accepted in the beloved; that is to ſay, in *Chriſt* who is the firſt lovely and amiable perſon, and all others loved in him, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed; with him for himſelf.* In him, that is, with all Believers, who are his Members in reference to him; God firſt of all loves *Chriſt*, and in him all his Children, and true Chriſtians for his ſake, God does not eleſt us for *Chriſt*, but in *Chriſt*; but the fruits of his Election, they are conveyed unto us through *Chriſt*; ſo that as nothing is able to ſeparate Gods love from *Chriſt*, ſo nothing is able to ſeparate Gods love from a *Chriſtian*. I have declared thy Name unto them, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou haſt loved me may be in them,

them, and I in thee; as our Saviour there speaks, in *Job*. 17. 20.

The love which God bears to a *Christian*, it is a love of *Covenant*; and this *Covenant* made in *Christ*. And so upon that account also an *unchangeable* love, as the Scripture still expresses it unto us, *Esay* 54. 9, 10, *This is as the waters of Noah unto me, &c. The Mountains shall depart, and the hills shall be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy upon thee, &c.* Thus we see in all these respects, how Gods love to his Children is *immoveable*.

The Consideration of this Point may be thus far useful to us, as to teach us to *make God our Friend* above all others whatsoever, and to *rejoyce* and to *continue* in his love, *Job*. 15. 9. It is a very great comfort and encouragement in matter of *Acquaintance* to have a *firm and constant* friend, to have one whose love we may be *sure of*, and may *rely upon* at all adventures, and upon all occasions: Now such an one as this is the *Lord*; he is one, whose love shall never be removed or taken away from us, where it is once *fasten'd upon us*. As for *Men*, they are *fickle*, in regard of their *Natures*, and so may be also for their *Affection*: And they love sometimes but for sinister respects, which when those cease, their love ceases with them: Their love lasts no longer than a mans wealth, or his honour, or his favor, or such as *these*. *The rich*, sayes Solomon, *has many Friends*, namely, so long as his riches *continue*; but when they are gone, his Friends are gone too: *Nullus ad amissus ibit amicus opes*; yea, but with *God* now it is far otherwise, those whom he sets his love upon, he loves them in all conditions; of poverty, of disgrace, of captivity, of whatever we can imagine, who remembered us in our *low estate*, for his mercy *indureth for ever*, *Psal.* 136. 2, 3. *Affliction* is so far from taking off Gods love from his Children, as it *ingages* it so much the more unto them, as the *Mother* that loves the *Child that is sick* more then *all the rest besides*; This should make us to take him for our Friend, and to be much comforted from our Interest in him: And so much may suffice to have spoken of the *first intimation* in this Question; namely, as to the *thing* it self; *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* that is, who shall *take off* Christ's love from us.

The *Second* is as to the *Discovery* or *Manifestation* of this his love, *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* that is, what shall be a sufficient Argument to persuade us that Christ does not love us? And so there is this in it: That there is no *Condition* so miserable as to be a sufficient *Ground or Argument* for the separation of Gods love from his Children: As there is nothing which *does sever* it; so there is nothing, which can prove it to be *sever'd*; Thus *Ecc.* 9. 1. *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him; all things fall alike to all, &c.* If men would take a *true and perfect* account of this business, whether God loves them or no, they cannot do it by any thing which in this life happens unto them, whether of *good or evil*; outward Crosses and Afflictions are no *prejudice or disparagement* here at all. This may appear unto us, if we look upon the *dearest* of Gods Servants, who, as we might instance in *sundry Examples*, have had the greatest share in such conditions as of any other: *Job*, and *David*, and *Paul*, and many other of the *Saints*; none have been more *afflicted*, and yet none have been more *beloved*.

The

The Afflictions of Gods Children are no *Arguments* for the separation of Gods love.

First, Because they are all dispens'd out of the *principles* of love; that cannot be an Argument to prove the *want* of love, which is an Argument rather to prove the *truth* of love; now the Afflictions of Gods Children, if we consider *rightly* of them, they proceed from his *love* unto them, as I have lately had occasion to shew from another passage in this Chapter; *As many as I love, I rebuke, &c.*

Secondly, It cannot be that *Affliction* should be a *withdrawing* of Gods *Affection*, because he never shews *more* Affection, then he does in such a *Condition*; when the Servants of God have *least* of these outward and worldly accommodations; they have oftentimes so much the more of the comforts of the *Holy Ghost*.

Thirdly, These outward Afflictions are no good Argument for the separation of Gods love; because the love of God reaches farther than these things *here below*: It is not *limited* or confined to this *present life*, but is extended to that which is to come, and may shew it self there: *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived the things that God has prepared for them that love him.*

The Use of all *tends to this purpose*, namely, as a special comfort and encouragement to the Children of God, and a *prevention* of all *Objections*, which in this respect may arise *in their hearts*; There is nothing, which a *true Child of God* is more ambitious of, than Gods love; nor there is *nothing* which he is *more fearful of*, than the Eclipse and *Interruption* of it to him; when either *Satan* or his own *private Conscience* does any thing doubt of it, or call into question, as they are sometimes apt to do occasionally from such *Dispensations*, so as to think that God does not love them, or truly *affect* them. Now consider this here of the Apostle *Paul* in this triumphant exhortation, and draw out the sweetness of it for our own comfort and satisfaction in such cases; God loves them, and loves them *unseparably*.

This is that which may support Gods Children in the worst *times and conditions* in this world that they can possibly fall into, as no man knows what may happen unto him. *Times of separation in other respects*, yet they cannot be separating *in this*: They may separate a *Minister* from his *People*, they may separate an *Husband* from his *Wife*, they may separate a *Father* from his *Children*, they may separate the *Soul* from its *Body*. Oh but, they cannot separate a *Christian*, or true Believer from *Christ*; nor from the *love of God* to him in *Christ*. They may unhappily divide Affections *between Man and Man*, as we see oftentimes they do by *sad experience*; but they cannot divide Affections betwixt *Man and God*, which as it is the *nearest Union*, so it is also the *strongest Affection*, and such as there is nothing whatsoever which is able to dissolve, or cut in sunder. And so now I have done with the first general part of the Text which is this Question or challenge, as it is considerable in the general Proposition, *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ.*

The Second is the *particular specification* of evils themselves, which are *seven* in number; shall *Tribulation or Distress, &c.* shall these? or any of these? No, they shall not be able to separate or divide the love

of Christ from his Members; what before he had deliver'd in the *Gross*, he now further signifies in the *special Ennumeration*; wee'l take them in their particular order, as they lye here before us, and speak somewhat severally of them all.

The *First* which is here presented is *Tribulation*; The word in the Greek is *thlipsis* from *thalo*, which signifies to *press*, or *pinch*, or *vex*; and the word in the Latine, *Tribulatio*, is from *Tribula*, which signifies a *Threshing-Instrument*, or *flayle*, wherewith the Corn uses to be *broken*, or *beaten out*; both of them do serve to set forth to us the *Nature* of this present evil, which is here mention'd, or consisting in any outward pressure or Affliction, which belongs to mans body, and is prevailing of that. Shall that be able to prejudice or hurt the Children of God in this particular? No it shall not.

There are *three things* which in *this Head* are here considerable of us concerning *Tribulation*; First, That it is *such a thing* as is incident even to *people of God*. Secondly, That of it self, it is a *very heavy*, and grievous *Affliction*. Thirdly, That notwithstanding it shall not be hurtful to Gods Children, nor *separate them from the love of Christ*.

First, I say, *this Evil of Tribulation*, it is such as is incident even to the *Saints and Servants of God*; they are such as are subject and lyable to great *pains and griefs of body*. To this preserving of the *outward man*, many of Gods dear Children *they have been*, and *still are* exercised with this kind of Affliction: Thus St. Paul of himself and his Companions, *We would not have you ignorant of our trouble*, that is, of our *pressure which came to us in Asia*; the word in the Original signifies, that *we were pressed out of measure, above strength, &c.* 2 Cor. 1. 8. And so 2 Cor. 4. 5, *We are troubled, or pressed on every side, &c.* Look as it was with *Christ himself*, so it is also in a proportion with his *Members*. As for him, he is said to have been *bruised*, Esay 53. 10, *It pleased the Lord to bruise him, and put him to grief*, He was knock'd, and broken, and bruised, and press'd to purpose, *he had the Wine-press of Gods wrath*, as is express'd of him; and so is it also with those that belong unto him, they must expect the same dealing likewise, even to *suffer Tribulation*; as it is in *Act. 14. 22*. *We must through much Tribulation, enter into the Kingdom of God*. St. Paul he had his tribulation, his thorn in the *Flesh*, &c. And so it is with many others, &c.

The Apostle here instances in *this* as a *principal Evil*, as that which is more *General and Common*, and which *few escape*: As for some other particulars which we find here mention'd in the Text, they are such as *all do not taste of*, but in *some cases only*, and in *some times*; but for *Tribulation*, there are few or none but at some time or other have some *feelings and brushings* of it, and it is such as does easily *befall them*.

Now this in the *second place* is a *sad and grievous evil*, and such as is ready to shake even the *strongest that are*, we may see it in Holy *Job* for an instance how it was *with him*, when he lay under those grievous boyles, and sores, which he was afflicted withall, what a shrewd Temptation it was to him; and though otherwise a *patient man*, and the *example of patience* to others; yet how it made him *to forget himself*, and to break forth into some *speeches of distemper*. Those who are well at ease themselves, and who feel no torments or pains, they are not so
appe-

apprehensive of it; but those who are sickly and diseased, they know what an evil it is.

But yet even *this* in the next place shall not separate them from the love of God in Christ, a Child of God is most dear to him, even under Tribulation it self; there's not a wound, or sore, or sickness, which any of Gods Servants do undergo, but the Lord himself is sensible of it, and does dispose it to their greatest good. He that tears them, he heals them; he that smites them, he binds them up; and makes even the broken bones themselves to rejoyce.

There's a great deal of difference betwixt the righteous and the wicked in this particular; betwixt Gods Children and Men of the world; as for the wicked and men of the world, Tribulation it makes them so much the worse, and does further extract and draw out that Corruption, which is already in them, of Murmuring, and Impatience, and Blasphemy, and Rebellion against God; The wicked are as the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast out mire and dirt, as it is in Esay 57. ver. 20, &c. But now as for the Children of God, their tribulations make them so much the better; more useful, and profitable, and beneficial, and communicative to others, as you know it is with your sweet fragrant spices, when they lye whole, and altogether in a lump, they do not commonly send out such a sweet smell from them; but take them, and put them into a Mortar, and there break them, and punne them, and bruise them, and then they are wonderful odoriferous and savoury in the nostrils of all; even so is it also (as I may say) in like manner with the Children of God; Whiles they are safe, and (as I may say) skin-whole, it may be their graces are not so eminent or conspicuous in them; but let them be bruised in the wine-press of Gods Affliction, and then they do appear what they are; then they send out a sweet precious savour in the Nostrils both of God and Man, and discover many excellent Graces to Gods Glory, and the comfort of others, in the Communion of Saints. And this is the first evil here specified, viz. Tribulation.

The second particular evil is Distress; shall Distress? The Greek Word is *συνωστια*, which signifies properly straitness of place; when a man is so hamper'd, as that he knows not which way to move, or to turn himself, as it is with those who are shut up in some close and strait Prison, or are in some violent throng and crowd. But here in this Scripture it is transfer'd from the Body to the Mind, to note and point out unto us the anguish and the perplexity of that.

Now this is another evil which Gods people are also lyable unto, as to great and strong pressures of body, so to be in many sad distractions of Spirit, to be in Distress; It has been the lot sometimes of those who have been the dearest servants of God, they have now and then been in such perplexities, as that they have not known what to do, nor which way to turn themselves; ye may see it in divers Instances and Examples, this was the lot of Jacob, when his Brother Esau was coming against him, Gen. 32. 7. It is said, he was greatly afraid and distressed, he knew not what course almost to take. This was the lot of David, when the Prophet Gad came to him with a message of propounding three judgments to him, whereof to take his choice, he professes that he was in a great strait, 2 Sam. 24. 14. This was the lot of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chro. 20. 12. when the Moa-
bites

bites and Ammonites came against him, and he was encompass'd with them, he was very much troubled and distress'd, *We know not what to do*, sayes he, *but our eyes are unto thee*.

This is an evil somewhat further and heavier than the former, which we spake of before; *Anguish of Spirit* is somewhat more than *pressure of Body*, and which many times has a great Influence upon it. The spirit of a Man (sayes Solomon) will sustain his Infirmities, but a troubled spirit who can bear? when the mind is at any time full of anxiousness, and perplexity, and distraction, it is a very great burthen; well, but yet this is not such as shall prejudice the comfort of a Believer; not perplexity, or distress it self. A Christian is never brought into those Exigencies, and Straits, and Extremities, but he has still a God to go to, into whose bosome he may comfortably empty and unload himself, and find satisfaction from him (through the use of means) in all his distresses; he may be distressed, but not sunk with distresses, which seems to be the meaning of that place in 2 Cor. 4. 8, *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed*. The very words which are here used in the Text, how do these two places of Scripture accord and agree together? For here in this place before us, the Apostle makes mention of *Tribulation and Distress* both together, as incident to the Servants of God; There in that other place, he sayes, *We are troubled, yet not distressed*? How I say do these consist? yes, very well, according as they may be expounded; for here in the Text he speaks of such a distress as did arise from the things themselves; but there in that other place he speaks of such a distress as did arise from the want of all redress. Now Gods People, though they may be many times brought into a distressed condition; yet they are not absolutely distressed in it; because they are never driven so hard, but they have still God himself near unto them, to direct them what is to be done by them; this is to be in distress, and yet not to be distress'd; to have distress so, as not to separate us from the love of God in Christ.

Now this is that which should uphold Gods Servants in such cases as these are, when they fall into any straits, or perplexed conditions, not to despair, or to be quite out of heart; much less to use any unlawful means for the expediting and freeing of themselves; but rather to sustain themselves from that Interest which is still remaining to them in the Love and Affection of God himself, which is more than all things else unto them; of this we have a notable pattern and example in the fore-mention'd David in his condition at Ziklag, 2 Sam. 30. 6. It is said there, that he was greatly distressed, and there was cause for it, his Wives were captives, his City burnt, his people mutinous, the Soul of all about him was grieved, and they had wept till they could weep no more. Well, but what does he now for his relief in this perplexity, ye may see there in the close of the Verse; But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God. In the Lord God in regard of his All-sufficiency, and in his God, in regard of his propriety and interest in him, Gods Children when they are most straitned in themselves, yet they find an Inlargement in God, *I called upon the Lord in distress: the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place*, Psal. 118. 5. And that is the second evil, which is here mention'd, namely Distress.

The third is *Persecution*. Shall persecution? *διωγμός*, which signifies properly a driving from place to place. When men are forced and constrained to leave their home and proper Habitations, and to fly into other places and Countries. This is another Evil which the Servants of God sometimes are subject unto, as St. Paul speaks of himself, and the rest of his Brethren, to have no certain dwelling-place, 1 Cor. 4. 11. To be driven from Country to Country, and from one place to another, as our Saviour himself there intimates in the counsel which he gives to his Disciples, Mat. 10. 23. Well, but this is not such as can separate us from the love of Christ. Not exile, or solitariness, or banishment, or persecution it self; we shall find, if we look into Scripture, and daily experience, how the Lord has been present with his Servants, even in such cases and conditions as these, when they have been furthest from their own homes; even then has he been nearest unto them. Jacob, when he was driven by his Brother Esau from his Fathers house; yet the Lord was then an house unto him, appeared to him, and more especially bless'd him, in his greatest remoteness. Elijah when he was persecuted by Jezabel, who threatened him to take away his life; he had then an Angel sent to refresh him, and to encourage him, and to comfort him by the way. St. John, when he was banish'd into Patmos by the fury of the Emperour Domitian, yet he even there enjoyed Communion with Christ, and is said to be ravished in the Spirit, on the Lords-day. There is no place so remote, but as God can find out his Enemies, to punish them, so he can find out his people to relieve them, and to comfort them, and to express himself to them: Every Land is his Country, who has Heaven it self for his home. Persecution it cannot separate us from the love of Christ; it may drive us to him, but it cannot drive us from him; It may separate us from our houses, these poor cottages of clay, but it cannot separate us from him, who is our abode, and dwelling-place in all Generations, nor deprive us of our everlasting Habitation: He that dwelleth in the secret of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty, Psal. 91. 1.

The Fourth thing here instanced in, is *Famine*; *ἀνάγκη*. This is another great Affliction which Gods people are subject unto here in this life, which consists in the want of sustenance and bodily nourishment; it uses to be reckoned in the number of Gods Plagues, in Scripture; the evil arrows of famine, and the breaking of the staff of bread: And it is that which the Servants of God have now and then more or less been exercised withall. They have fallen into such times and places wherein the Famine has prevailed much upon them. Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Patriarchs, they have happen'd to live in dayes of Famine: Well, but not this evil neither can separate from the love of God; nor is any argument of the with-drawing of it from us, In famine he shall deliver thee from Death; and at Destruction and Famine thou shalt laugh, Job. 5. 20. and 23. God can give the staff of Comfort, where he takes away the staff of bread; and God can feed with the bread of life, where he denyes corporal food and provision; I have meat to eat which you know not of, sayes our Saviour to his Disciples; and so may a Christian say to men of the world: There's the hidden Manna, which he can feed on, where he has hardly a morsel besides.

It is a wonderful thing to consider what strange kind of ways and means God has been pleased to provide for his Servants in this particular, sometimes by taking away their appetite, and suspending of their Natural desire, as that Martyr said of himself; that if God took away his meat, he would likewise take away his stomach. And sometimes by supplying their appetites by strange and miraculous provisions. The Israelites fed with Manna in the wilderness. Elijah fed by a Raven. The Famine of Samaria relieved from the Camp of the Syrians, &c.

What does all this come to, but to strengthen our faith in this particular upon all occasions, these are evils which do sometimes threaten us, especially in sad and unseasonable weather, which washes the Corn out of the ground, and bespeaks a scarcity of it. Now it is good to be provided with comfort, where we are not provided with Corn, and to feed upon the promises, where other food may be restrained from us. This is that which for encouragement is signified to the Children of God, in Psal. 34. 18, 19, *The Eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy: To deliver their soul from Death, and to keep them alive in Famine.*

The fifth particular evil is Nakedness; *nuditas*. This is another tryal of the Saints, and the evil of it consists in two particulars. The one is, as it is matter of shame, and the other as it is matter of danger, and hazard of life it self; for cloaths (though they are too often made the occasions rather of Vanity and Pride) yet they are principally useful and necessary in this regard, for the covering of shame, and to preserve from violence and mischief. Now in the defect of both of these, is Nakedness a very great Affliction; This is another way, whereby Satan, and such as are his Instruments, do sometimes exercise the patience of the Saints; St. Paul amongst the rest of the Afflictions and Calamities, which himself did endure, reckons up Cold and Nakedness, 2 Cor. 11. 27. And St. Basil tells us of forty Martyrs in ancient time, who were stript and driven forth in the night to be pinched and pined with cold, and then afterwards were taken in the day and burnt with fire. And these later times in our neighbouring Nations, have afforded as sad examples of the like barbarousness in this particular.

Well, but this Nakedness or stripping of Apparel, cannot strip the Children of God of his love and favour in Christ, which shall still compass them about as a Garment. In all this nakedness of Body, God will not leave their souls naked, as the word there properly signifies, Psal. 141. 8. God pities his naked Servants, and casts his Skirt over them, Ezek. 16. 8. He covers them with his wings, and hides them under his Feathers as the Scriptures express; he that's cloathed with the righteousness of Christ, and with the white linnen of the Saints, he has so forth a fence against nakedness, as to the evil and malignity of it; no such sad nakedness as that indeed, when men are destitute of true and saving Grace, and exposed to Sin and Temptation; as Aaron it is said, he made the people naked; but for other nakedness, as all other evils, it is sanctified to Believers in Christ, who when he was Crucified, was stript of his Garments, &c. And that's also a fifth particular.

The sixth here instanced in, is Peril; whereby we are to understand any danger, or hazard of life in any kind whatsoever; It is that which

which the Apostle Paul makes mention of concerning himself, 2 Cor. 11. 26, *In perils of Robbers, in perils of Waters, in perils in the City, in perils in the Wilderness, &c.* These and the like were the perils which this holy man was exposed unto; and therefore does he here mention it in the Text.

Danger and fear of evil, is many times a greater evil than the evil it self; and we know what difficulties and adventures it has sometimes put men upon. Well, but *this* also is made up to Gods Children in the love of Christ; his love it either keeps them from peril, or supports them and sustains them in it, as we have divers instances and experiments of it: In perils at home, and perils abroad; perils by fire, and perils by water; and perils in travail, by Land and by Sea, and in Child-birth; and all such occasions. Our lives for the nature of them, are nothing else as, I may say, but Perils; and Gods Providences towards us, are nothing else (I may say) but Deliverances, He shall give his Angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy wayes, &c. Psal. 91. 11. He keeps the feet of his Saints, 2 Sam. 2. 9. The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in from this time forth, and for ever, Ps. 121. ult.

There are seasons and times of peril which Gods Children are exposed unto; but God does not leave them at such times, nor withdraw his love from them; in the world sometimes it is otherwise; There are many that will own their Friends in times of safety, which yet will not know them in times of danger; as the Disciples when Christ was in some hazard, they then all withdrew from him, and provided for themselves. And St. Paul he complains that when he was in danger all men forsook him; yea, but God did not forsake him then; notwithstanding sayes he, the Lord stood by me and comforted me, 2 Tim. 4. 16, 17. When other Friends separate themselves from them, Gods love it shall still cleave to his Children.

The seventh and last, is Sword; *visques*, whereby we are to understand all kind of violent death whatsoever: This is that which the Godly Martyrs in all times are instances of, they were hewen asunder, and slain with the Sword, as John Baptist, and James, and divers others; but these though their heads were sever'd from their Bodies, yet their Hearts could not be sever'd from Christ, nor his from them.

And so for the evils of War, it is considerable there also; This is usually expres'd by the Sword: But Gods Children have a promise of Gods love and favour to them in this, as in Famine to redeem them from Death; so in War from the power of the Sword, Job. 5. 20. This as it concerns all others; so more especially Christian Souldiers which are men of the Sword; where they are engaged upon good occasions? and go forth with good hearts, they have a great deal of confidence in this particular; because they are still assured of Gods love and favour in Christ; and so may safely commit their souls and lives into his hand; there's nothing more desperate than for any to fight with men, where they are at difference and variance with God, to go forth with the guilt of their own Consciences crying against them; which is to fight even with Heaven it self: But now where peace is made in Christ, his love will support them, and carry them through all Adventures; so much also for that, and all these seven distinct particulars; and so we have this challenge or question, both as considerable in the general Proposition, as also the Particular Specification.

And now to shut up all in a word, the *proper use* of all this to our selves, is not only for *Incongruement*, but for *Ingagement*; and seeing nothing can separate us from the love of Christ, in a *passive* sense, nothing should separate us from the *love of Christ* neither in an *Active*; that is, seeing Christ will *love us* even in the saddest conditions; we should learn in the saddest conditions to *love him* likewise. However God deals with us, we should learn to keep close unto him, and to comply with him. There are many which are ready to *love God* as long as he deals prosperously with them, as to their outward condition; as *Satan* said of *Job*, whiles God fences them, and hedges them about on every side, they are content to be the *Disciples of Christ* in such cases as these, and to pretend to some kind of love to him; but shall nothing indeed separate them from the love of Christ in *this* sense? Shall not Tribulation? Shall not Distress, and the like? Oh it were much to be wish'd it *might* not, I am sure it *should* not; and that upon consideration of what has been said of it in the *other* sense.

Beloved, we should learn and be perswaded to have *good thoughts* of God in all his dealings with us, and as to believe that he *still* all the *while* loves us, so also to endeavour all that may be, that we may *love him* again: And that nothing may possibly separate us or divide him and us; This is the true temper of a Christian, and which we should frame our selves to in a diversity and variety of Conditions. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the 35th. verse of this Chapter.

Now as for the 36th Verse which follows, *as it is written*, and because it is only a *quotation*, and belongs to another portion of Scripture in the *Old Testament*, where it has an handling proper to it in the due place of it, *Psal.* 44. ver. 22. Therefore I shall not at all meddle with this in the *matter* of it; only take notice as it is a Testimony; how Scripture agrees with the Scripture, and the Spirit of God in the *New Testament*, with the Spirit of God in the *Old*.

The next Verse therefore to be handled, will be the 37th. Verse of this Chapter in the words that follow, *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.* And of this (God willing, and with his Assistance) we shall speak upon the next occasion.



S E R M O N X L I.

R O M. 8. 36.

(As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.)

THese words are a further enlargement and amplification of the last particular, which is mention'd in the fore-going verse, amongst the rest of the several Afflictions which the Apostle had reckon'd up in his Challenge, as not able to separate either him, or any other of the Believers, from the love of Christ. This was one, the Sword; that is, as I have expounded it unto you, violent Death; whether by the Sword, which is most usual, or else any other Instrument for the deprival of life. Now because it might be happily objected, why, but do you *Paul* fear the Sword? will any one offer or dare to take away the life of a Christian, and of one which is a Servant of God. The Apostle does therefore here illustrate it by a citation out of the Old Testament, in *Psal. 44. 22*, *As it is written, yea, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are, &c.* Yes, sayes he, It is no strange kind of business; it is a thing not lately invented, but has been alwayes practis'd.

In which words we have two general Parts observable of us: First, The sentence which is alledged. Secondly, The form of Allegation. The sentence which is alledged is this, *For thy sake we are killed, &c.* The form of Allegation, that's in these words, *As it is written.*

We begin first of all with the former, and that is the sentence it self; *For thy sake we are kill'd all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.* In which words again we have four Particulars: First, Here's the Affliction it self, and that's killing; *We are killed.* Secondly, Here's the occasion and ground of it; *For thy sake*: We are kill'd for thee. Thirdly, Here's the duration and extent of it, continually; *All the day long.* And lastly, Here's the amplification; It's made a business of no great consequence, the taking away of our lives; *We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

First, Wee'll take notice of the Affliction, and that's *killing*; *We are kill'd.* We see here what's the lot and portion of the Saints and Servants of God, what they are liable and subject unto; even to *killing*

it self, to a forced and violent death from the hands of their Enemies. It is that which I may shew unto you in divers examples, how nothing has contented the Enemies, but the blood and death of the Saints: To kill them, and take away their lives; it was that which did manifest it self in the first Enemy that was in the World; *Cain* towards his Brother *Abel*, as one that would set a pattern to all others that should ever come after him; he first of all begins with killing, *Gen. 4. 8, Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.* He began only with talking, but his talking it ended in slaying, as many mens do; their words they end in Swords and Blows, and shedding of blood. Thus did *Cain's* here, the first Persecutor in the world that ever was; his persecution it was vented in slaying. Thus it was with those which came after, *Esan* another Persecutor of the same spirit and disposition, he has a quarrel against his brother *Jacob*, for robbing and preventing him of the Blessing; How will he right himself in it; he will do it by blood: This was his resolution, though God in providence prevented him from it, *Gen. 27. 41, The dayes of mourning for my Father are at hand, and then will I slay my brother Jacob.* *Haman*, when he conspired against the *Jews*, what was his Commission? ye shall see in *Ester 3. 13.* The Letters were sent by Posts into all the Kings Provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish all the *Jews*, both Young and Old, little Children and Women, &c. The Scribes and Pharisees in Christ's time, what did they study? they sought how to kill him, as we may see oftentimes in the Gospel, and at last did accomplish it. And for his Disciples, how did they use them? after the same manner also, as our Saviour himself also fore-tells them, *Joh. 16. 2, The time cometh that whosoever killeth you, shall think he doth God service.* Not to instance in any more but this, it is spoken to *Jerusalem*, *Matth. 23. 37, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee: how often? &c.*

There's a two-fold account which I shall give you of this Observation: The one is, whence it comes about in regard of the Enemies; what makes them to do it. And the other is, whence it comes about in regard of the Saints, how they come to suffer it, and indure it?

First of all, In regard of the Enemies; To take an account of it in them; whence do they come to do it? what's the matter with them, that in their dealings with the people of God, nothing will serve their turn but killing and slaying, and taking away their lives? Surely, it is not to be wondred at; there's very good reason for it, which may be given in these considerations:

First, Look upon them in their Brood and Generation, and the Stock they come of; whose Children are they? and from whom do they proceed? Children take after their Parents, and do very much partake of the nature and disposition of those which breed them; and so do wicked men of the nature and disposition of theirs. Now, who I beseech you is theirs? whom have the Enemies of the Church for their Father? and whom do they come from? Our Saviour Himself has resolved it, speaking of those which would have kill'd Himself; to wit, the *Jews*, in *Joh. 8. 44, Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the lusts of your Father*

ye will do: He was a Murtherer from the beginning, and so are you likewise answerable to him. When *Jehoram* sent Messengers to *Elisha* the man of God, to deprive him of his life; What sayes the Prophet hereunto, in 2 *King.* 6. 32, See (sayes he) how this Son of a Murtherer hath sent to take away mine head. Mark, This Son of a Murtherer; it was no wonder for him to be a Murtherer, whose Father was a Murtherer before him: The Son of a Murtherer is very easily inclinable to murther; from the usuall likeness which is commonly between Father and Son in this particular. This sin it is many times propagated, and traduced, and conveyed in a stock; why, thus 'tis now with all those which are ungodly Persecutors of God's people; It is no wonder they should be given to killing, for they come of a killing-brood: Their Father was a killer before them, and his Name which is given to him, is a *Destroyer*; it's proper unto him, and so therefore it is natural to them. *Cain*, he slew his Brother, and what's the account which is given of it? in 1 *Joh.* 3. 12. Why, 'tis this, He was of that wicked one, *in se ipso*, he came of a malignant Stock, of an ungodly Race and Generation; how so? he was the Son of *Adam*, who is said to be the Son of God: It is true, he was so by natural propagation; but for spiritual, he had another descent, even from Satan himself: And so is it with every other Enemy and ungodly Person besides; let him have never so godly Parents, and Religious in a way of Nature, yet spiritually he is of a devilish Race: He that committeth sin is of the Devil; that is, he which makes a trade of it, which delights in it, and gives himself to it as wicked men do, he may call him his Father, who is a Sinner and a Murtherer from the beginning. Well, but this is a little too general, we may come a little nearer then so, and shew you, why wicked men do so delight in killing God's people, out of the particular Principles in them.

Therefore in the second place, their dispositions carry them hereunto, and that in a two-fold respect. There are two special affections in the Enemies of the Church of God, which do make them set themselves to kill them: The one is, because they hate them. And the other is, because they fear them: There's malice on one side, and there's jealousy and suspicion on the other. They look upon them as those which are odious and hateful before them, and they look upon them as those which are troublesome and prejudicial to them, and for these two reasons they desire to make riddance of them, and to take away their lives.

First, It proceeds from their malice; they hate them, and cannot abide them; therefore they kill them: hatred, when it comes to the height of it, very easily proceeds to murther. The very Heathen could take notice of this by the light of Nature, *Quem oderunt perire cupiunt*. He whom men hate, they wish a riddance and dispatch of him; yea, not only do barely wish it, but also sometimes do endeavour it, and procure it themselves. There is so near and close an affinity betwixt these two, hatred and murther, that the Apostle *John* does resolve them plainly into one, 1 *Joh.* 3. 15, He that hateth his Brother is a Murtherer; why! because it does tend, and incline, and carry hereunto. And hence now does it come to pass that wicked men are so mischievous as they are, that they care not for taking away of the life of the Servants of God, because they bear an hatred unto them. If they were askt and
call'd

call'd to an account, what it is which makes them so outrageous, they might very well answer in this respect, what *Ahab* said once of *Micaiah* in plain terms, *I hate him, I cannot abide him, I absolutely abhor him*; this is the very reason of it. This is the nature of hatred, that it thinks it can never do mischief enough to the person it hates: Now because that this is the height of all mischief, the taking away of natural life; forasmuch as that is the greatest and the sweetest natural good, and the ground and foundation of all the rest; therefore are the Enemies of God's people so set upon killing. It is the greatest hurt they can do, the murdering and killing of the body; and therefore where it lies in their power, they will do that, all they can; and when they have done it once, if it were possible, they would do it again: There's no end nor bounds of their malice in this respect.

Beloved, It is an unexpressible business; the hatred which is in wicked men to the Children of God unexpressible; nay, 'tis unconceivable, ye cannot imagine it, where it is in the height and top of it: It is beyond all apprehension, the Scripture can hardly find phrases bad enough to set it out by. It makes choice of such as are taken from the Creatures in their greatest enmity, the Wolf and the Lamb, the Leopard and the Kid, the Calf and the young Lyon, &c. In each of which there is an enmity and opposition, and endeavour to destroy. We use to say of men, That *homo homini Lupus*, One man's a Wolf to another: But it holds in none more true, then in wicked men to the Children of God; here is the greatest wolfishness, and hatred, and enmity that can be; and such again as the like is to be found in none other besides. Take all the other Differences and Quarrels which fall out to be sometimes in the world; there is none of them all but is a great deal more capable of composing and reconciling then this by many degrees. *Herod* will be friends with *Pilate*, but he will never be friends with Christ; and so I may say of others of the same disposition with him, the Enemies and Persecutors of God's people, they carry a most desperate and irreconcilable hatred against them, whiles they remain in that condition; and therefore it cannot be a wonder, if they be set upon it to destroy them. Though there were no other reason then this, yet this were a very perfect account of it, why the people of God should be kill'd by the men of the world: The unconceivable enmity which is betwixt them; where there's hatred and malice, there will very easily be shedding of blood. And that's the first Affection and Disposition which is observable in them.

The second is their Jealousie and fear; As they kill them, because they hate them; so they kill them, because they fear them; where there is no precedent malice at all, or hatred to such and such persons; yet if they be conceived to be such as may prove prejudicial unto them, wicked men are there perswaded to murder them, and take away their lives, that so as they think they may make the surer work. *This is the Heir, come let us kill him, that the Inheritance may be ours*: He that's kill'd will do no more hurt, that's the desperate Principle which such men go by in this case. Thus ye may see it was with *Pharaoh*, when he commanded the *Egyptian* Midwives to kill the *Israelites* Children, and the people to cast them into the River; It was for fear they should grow too great,

great, and prevail against him : It was not so much out of the principles of hatred (for ye know he spared the Females) as out of the principles of fear. So it was likewise with *Herod*, when he slew so many male Children which were in *Bethlehem*, and the Coasts thereof, from two years old, and under : He did it for this reason, that he might make his business so much the faster, in the slaying and killing of Christ, whom he aimed at in that Massacre, as one whom he thought would prove prejudicial to his Kingdom and Throne, and in time pull down that : This was that which made him so bloody and cruel, his jealousy and suspicious apprehension : And so is it likewise the ground (for the most part) of all others besides. This is the reason why Enemies make so much havock of God's people, because they look upon them as a Generation which are opposite and contrary to them, which cross them, and stand in their way, and do hinder and blast those ends which they propound to themselves. Thus we find that wicked *Haman*, which was the Adversary and Enemy of the *Jews*, to represent that people to *Ahasuerus*, as an argument for which he should destroy them, because they had contrary Laws, and it was not for his profit to suffer them, in *Ester* 3.8,9. Mark, *It was not for his profit*, because they had contrary Customs and Laws. Alas, what though they had, yet they were but a small and inconsiderable number, which could do no great hurt ; yea, but they might do it in time, as they might further multiply and grow up : And there was this likelihood for it, because their Principles and their Laws were contrary ; therefore destroy them. And so I may say in a manner it is with others in the like kind ; every wicked man and ungodly person in the world, he looks upon a true Christian as one ruled by another Law, and as one which is ready to ruinate and undermine himself ; Principles of strictness they overthrow Principles of looseness ; and the maintainers of the one, they are shakers of the maintainers of the other. They that stand for holiness of life, for the Exercises and Duties of Religion, the Sanctification of the Sabbath, the mortification of Lusts ; for Justice, and Temperance, and Meekness, and Sobriety, and the like. They are a people, which if they be suffer'd, there will be no sinning in the world with quiet ; men cannot do that which they would do, with that freedom and liberty as they desire, therefore the best way (they think) is to rid themselves of them, to dispatch them, and turn them out of the world. As that mad crew in the *Acts*, when they heard *Steven* give an account of his Faith, in *Acts* 7.54,57. It is said *they were cut to the heart, and gnasht at him with their teeth ; and cry'd out with a loud voice, and stoppt their ears, and ran violently upon him*. All for no other reason then this, because his Principles were contrary to theirs. And so another of the same brood, in their carriage to the Apostle *Paul*, *Acts* 22.22,23. When he there gave them an account of his conversion and turning to God : How do they there entertain him ? ye shall see there in that place ; *They cast off their Clothes, and threw dust into the Air, and lift up their voices, and said, Away with such a Fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live*. So again, *Acts* 21.28, *Men of Israel, help : This is the man that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the Law, and this place, &c.* So *Demetrius*, *Acts* 19.25, *We have hereby our wealth, &c.* And the Masters of the *Damofel*, that had the Spirit of Divination,

tion, *Act. 16. 20.* and many such like. And thus much of the account of the killing of God's people, taken from the Enemies, when they come to do it: *Herod feared John*, and therefore beheaded him.

The second is, How it comes about in regard of the Saints themselves, whence they come to suffer it, and for what reason God himself permits it: He that loves his Children so dearly and intirely as he has profest to do, That has said, *He will redeem their souls from violence; and precious shall their blood be in his sight*, in *Psal. 72. 14.* And again, *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints*, in *Psal. 116. 15.* How can he notwithstanding indure to see his Children slain before his eyes, and to be *kill'd all the day long*, as it is here exprest unto us; let us a little examine this. Surely, it is not without some great, and weighty, and special consideration; it is not but for some special cause that God suffers his Saints to be kill'd; *For thy sake we are kill'd*, that is, as we may in a sense expound it (though I think not the meaning of the place) by thy sufferance and permission: God does suffer and permit his people sometimes to be kill'd by their Enemies; *We are kill'd*.

Why does he so? First, for the honour of Religion, and the evidence of their Faith it self; that the world from hence may be convinced of their sincerity, and universal Obedience to the Will of God. If the Children of God should suffer only some light Affliction or Persecution in testimony to the Truth, it may be there are some which would be ready to put in Satan's Objection against *Job*, *Oh, skin for skin, and all that a man has will he give for his life*: But bring them but to this, and ye shall see them in another mood; do but offer to kill them, and they will then quickly turn their tune; you shall then see how they will change and alter their Religion: No, not so neither, God will so far make known the Power of his Spirit in them, in those which are his people, as that it shall be able to carry them to the suffering even of death it self; as *Paul* profest to his Friends, when they would have kept him from going to *Jerusalem*, because he should not fall into bonds, *Act. 21. 13*, *What mean ye* (sayes he) *to weep, and to break mine heart: for I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus*. As who should say, I do so little stand upon my liberty as in this case, I do not value my life. The constancy, and courage, and resolution of the Children of God is more discern'd by this occasion, as it is said in *Rev. 13. 10*, *He that killeth with the sword, must be kill'd with the sword*. Here is the patience and faith of the Saints; a trial, and an experiment, and an evidence and confirmation of that.

Secondly, Which is pertinent hereunto, for the multiplying and increasing of their number, and the drawing on of more unto them. This you may think somewhat strange, that their number should be increased by killing, which is a diminishing them, and taking them away: No, it is no wonder at all, it agrees well enough; for though it be a lessening of them in these particulars, yet it is an adding to them in many more. For one Christian that is kill'd, there's so many more converted and confirm'd in the love of Christianity: The blood of the Martyrs, we use to say, is the Seed of the Church, and a great many more do occasionally rise up out of their ashes. As they say after letting
of

of blood, the body is fill'd with so much more blood; As in the natural Body, so in the Mystical: In the Church, which is the Body of Christ, it replenishes after evacuation; and evacuation makes it to replenish so much the more: Even so is it in this particular, with the letting out of the blood of the Saints: Their killing is an occasion of their thriving; though the part looses, yet the whole it very much gains.

Thirdly, As the signification and evidence of future Judgment, and the dispensations of another World, the slaying and killing of the Saints, it tells us what shall be done to the Enemies, and how it is likely hereafter to go with the Servants of God. This we have intimated to us in *2 Thess. 1. 4, 5, 6, 7*, *So that we our selves glory in you, in the Churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: Which is a manifest token of the righteous Judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer. Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you: And to you which are troubled; rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven.* The worse the Saints are dealt with here, the better they shall be dealt with hereafter; and the worse shall it likewise be with them that dealt ill with them: *He that kills with the sword, shall be kill'd with the sword*, as it is in the place before cited: *And judgment shall be without mercy, to those which have shewn no mercy*, as it is in *James 2. 13*.

The Use of all this to our selves, which we have heard of the killing of the Saints, is to teach us what to look for, when we fall into such kind of hands as are here spoken of. Even to fare no better then others, in this case, which have gone before us; That which the people of God said of old in the time of *David*, they said likewise in the time of *Paul*: And that which they said in *Paul's* time, may we likewise now say in ours; and that's this, *We are kill'd*. These times, they do sufficiently and abundantly speak this in our ears in all places of Christendome. Look upon the Churches of *Germany*, and the *Palatinate*; And what's the cry of the Christians and people of God there? It is this, *Behold, we are killed*. Look upon our Brethren of *Ireland*, and the condition of the Church of God there; And what do we hear from them? *Behold, we are kill'd*. Thus, as the Apostle expresses it of himself, and others of his Brethren, may we say of the rest of Christians and Believers which are in the world, *That they are appointed to death*. This is not the single complaint of some few in a present discontentment, but which runs through all Ages.

Therefore it teaches us both to expect and prepare for the like; to provide for *killing*, and to be content to profess Christianity, even at so dear a rate as this; It will be worth it, when all is done, even of the loss of our lives themselves; which if we are unwilling to part with for Christ, he reckons us unworthy of him. I have shewen you formerly out of the verse which went before, how we must expect to meet with Afflictions. Now I rise a little higher, accordingly as the Text it self does, and shew you from hence that you are to expect and make account of the greatest, as being such as are incident unto you in your Christian course, even death and killing it self; we have it before us in the Times, and we have it before us in the Text; and the one receives

E e e

light,

light, and confirmation, and proof from the other: It was the voice of Christians then, and it is the voice of Christians also now; *For thy sake we are killed.*

But if they were indeed kill'd, how could they say they were kill'd, and tell us so in so many terms? *Killing*, it takes away complaining, and makes the Parties which are so dealt with incapable of saying what they are. Therefore these words they may be diversly interpreted and understood by us according to a different force and emphasis, which we may fasten upon them, in these particulars:

First, As an expression of impatience, and making the worst of their evil and affliction that possibly they could. This we shall find sometimes to be the nature and disposition of sorrow, to multiply and aggravate it self, and make it seem greater then it is. Those which are unaccustom'd to any trouble, and do not use to suffer hardness; if they be but hurt, they think themselves killed; every touch, it's a wound; and every wound, it's mortal with them. Not from the thing it self, but rather from their own tenderness and softness, being not able to endure grief, it represents it self usually in the most enlarged and extended expressions, and such as may most provoke to pity and commiseration. As we find the Church in the *Lamentations*, Lament. 1. 12, *Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see, if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger. Any sorrow like to my sorrow?* The Church when she was now in sorrow, she thought there was none like hers. And so it might be here in this place; *For thy sake we are kill'd*, that is, we think our selves so, because they were now in their mourning tune, and their vein of crying and complaint, as we may see, if we look into that *Psalms* whence this Scripture is taken, the 44th, the whole *Psalms* throughout.

But secondly, In the reality of the thing, the desperateness of their condition; They call it *killing*, because it tended thereunto, and was in a manner death it self. He that has received his mortal wound, he may be said to be kill'd whiles he lives, because he has that upon him which, in a few hours, will kill him indeed. The Hebrews call a dying-man *Ish maveth*, a man of death, and so he is: You know what was said to the first man *Adam* in Paradise, about his eating of the forbidden Fruit; *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*: And yet he did not die presently, but lived for many hundred years after; but yet he was said then to die, because he was then put into a mortal condition. He which before was in a state of Immortality, and incapable of any Corruption; he was now in a state of death. And so here, whiles the Church was under grievous Persecutions, Captivity, or what-ever it was; the people of God so far forth were said to be *kill'd*, even then when they lived. This is a very ordinary expression, and such as we shall frequently meet with in the Book of God. It is usual with the Spirit of God in Scripture to set forth to us some eminent danger, under the notion and name of death. In 1 Cor. 15. 31, *I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily*; that is, in regard of the daily dangers which I sustain, and am liable unto. So in 2 Cor. 1. 10. speaking of his danger in *Asia*, *Who delivered us from so*

so great a death, and doth deliver. Forasmuch as he was near to death, and had the sentence of death in himself, it is call'd a death. So 2 Cor. 4. 11, *For we which live are alwayes delivered unto death for Jesus sake;* We which live are delivered unto death. And again, in 2 Cor. 6. 9, *As dying, and behold, we live.* Here was dying and living both together: And so here.

Thirdly, From the preparation of their minds, and disposition which was in them hereunto, as occasion might require. The people of God in this Scripture count themselves *kill'd*, because they were ready to be so, if God should please to call them unto it: He that's a Martyr in intention, is interpretatively a Martyr in action; and he which rather then dishonour Religion, and the Cause of God, is willing and content to be *kill'd*, he is so far forth *kill'd* indeed. Look upon all those which are gone forth in the Service of the Church and Cause of Christ, and for the fighting of the Lords Battels; which are gone out with those Principles and Resolutions which they should do, and as it becomes those to do which undertake such kind of Employments; they may be said to be *kill'd*, even then when they live and escape, both because they are so in the appointment and designation of the Enemy: They aim and endeavour their killing, as also because they are so in their own readiness and preparation: They look and expect to be *kill'd*.

Killing, it is not to be interpreted in this place according to the event, but according to the intention and purpose: Those which are wounded, are *kill'd*; yea, those which are not toucht at all. Look as it is on the other side, for those which are active in *killing*; God reckons of them not according to their success, but according to their endeavour. They that go out in a wrong Cause, they *kill* where they do not hit, because they go out upon *killing* and murdering Principles. So here, though they stand for the right, and put themselves upon hazard and danger; they are *kill'd* even then when they are saved: He that but ventures his life for Christ, he looses it, and so shall be esteemed of him that reckons the will for the deed; and call's the things that are not as though they were. And that this is so indeed, and not a flourish and meer piece of Rhetorick, we may see by the killing of the Saints. Thus *Aquila* and *Priscilla* are commended in *Rom. 16. 4*, *That for the Apostles life, they had laid down their own necks*: How had they laid down their Necks, when they were now alive in safety, and so as he here greets them, and salutes them, and sends them thanks? Yes, they had laid down their Necks, forasmuch as they were ready hereunto; because, for *Paul's* sake, they committed and exposed themselves to danger, in venturing to bear him company, and to relieve him upon all occasions, in the midst of all his Persecutors; therefore they were said *to lay down their very necks and lives for him*: Their good will being reckoned for the deed.

Lastly, The people of God might here say *they were killed whiles they lived*, by way of sympathy and participation: They were killed, forasmuch as others were killed which they were interested in. Neither Comforts nor yet Afflictions are alwayes to be esteemed and judged of, as belonging only to the next and immediate subjects of them, but

likewise as well to all which have any reference or respect unto them. Look as Christians are said to be partakers of the Afflictions of Christ, and to be crucified and suffer with him; so are they said likewise to partake of the Afflictions of the rest of their Brethren, to be kill'd and suffer with them. The people of God in Prosperity, they suffer with them in Adversity; and being so as they should be, do reckon and account themselves so to do, and that in three particulars: First, In regard of their Relation. Secondly, In regard of their Connexion. And thirdly, In regard of their Cause.

First, In regard of their Relation; Men suffer not only in themselves, but likewise in those which are near them, and, as it were, so many parts of them; Parents in their Children, and Husbands in their Wives, and Brethren and Sisters in one another. Look how many Relations there are, in a manner so many sufferings; and where these Relations meet with killing, even as we may say so many deaths. Those which have Friends now abroad in the Field, and exposed to the casualties of War, they may be said either to live or die, according as it happens to those which have reference to them, notwithstanding absent from them: The Child in the Father, or the Wife in the Husband, or one Friend and Companion in another. Why, thus 'tis now in this case with the Church and People of God, they suffer in the sufferings of their Brethren, in regard of that near relation which is between them, and conjunction with them. The Apostle has set it forth by the resemblance of the natural body, *1 Cor. 12. 26, If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it*: If the Head or the Hand be wounded, the Tongue that complains, and the Feet have a share in it. Now (says the Apostle) *Ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular*: Therefore it becomes us to be affected as those which stand in this affinity and relation; we should look so upon one another, as Christ himself looks upon us: Christ, though he be now in Heaven, he reckons himself kill'd in his Saints; *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* And so should it likewise be with us, it is that which we are taught from this expression here in the Text; *We are said to be kill'd*. The whole Church together are kill'd, in the killings of some particular parts of it: It is that which is very fitly applicable to our selves in these killing-times; to reckon it as an universal killing, as such as does extend it self through the whole Christian world.

And accordingly hereunto we should be provoked to a double Duty: The one is of fellow-feeling and compassion, and the other is of self-inquiry and humiliation. We should look upon others miseries as the punishments of our own persons, and we should look upon our own sins as the occasions of others afflictions, in regard of the mutual connexion and conjunction which is between us and them.

First, I say, we should hence be provoked to the duty of commiseration; Are we kill'd in our Brethren? why then mourn for the killing of our Brethren, as we would do for the killing of our selves; we should labour every one to be affected in our Brethrens miseries, as in our own, and to attain to this excellency of a publick and general spirit, which (in regard of that self-love which is fore-told of the latter Times of the world) is a thing so rare in the world: How few are there which think

think they are kill'd, whiles themselves sit still and in safety? This is that we should bring our selves unto with the Christians in this place. As the Apostle exhorts the *Romans*, and in them all of us; *Weep with them that weep, and be of the same mind to one another.* As the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, in Heb. 13. 3, *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being your selves in the body:* Liable to the same Sufferings and Afflictions with them, and partaking in their personal Afflictions, from your Relation to them. Remember them to pity them, remember them to relieve them, remember them also to mourn and pray for them, whiles we escape in the midst of others Sufferings (as God be praised we do at present) we may take notice of it; to make us thankful, but not to make us forgetful. To make us so much thankfuller to God, but not to make us less sorrowful for our Brethren. It was the sin of those in the Prophet, that in the midst of their own Jollities, they forgot the *Afflictions of Joseph*. And on the other side, the commendation of *Uriah*, that neglected his own private Comforts, whiles the Ark and *Judah* abode in Tents. Seeing we suffer in our Brethren, it teaches us to mourn for them, as in the same condition with them.

Secondly, It teaches us also to be humbled, as being causes of their Suffering. When God strikes those which are near us, he bids us to look into our selves, and to see whether all be right in our own Consciences or no? Are we killed in our Brethren, then it is we are also with them corrected.

Secondly, In regard of their Connexion, and the dependance of one upon another. The Church might here say, *We are kill'd*, occasionally from the killings of their Brethren, forasmuch as their Brethrens killings were fore-runners and prognostications of theirs. As when a mans Neighbours house is a fire, he is put in mind to think of his own; Or as men when they are in a place of Infection, where they see others fall down dead before them, conclude they are dead men themselves; as who should say, their turn's next. And thus we shall find this expression, in *Numb.* 17. 12, 13. When the Children of *Israel* saw there what had happen'd to their Brethren, they began to be afraid themselves, and to give themselves for dead men; *Behold, say they, we die, we perish, we all perish: whosoever cometh any thing near unto the Tabernacle of the Lord shall die.* We shall be consumed with dying, what a strange kind of passion is this? But it arose from an apprehension of danger which they were in, from their Brethren dead before them. So here, *We are kill'd*, even then when we are alive, because we know not how soon we shall be; whiles we see it is thus with our Brethren, we cannot think we shall long escape our selves. This is another emphasis which may be fasten'd here upon these words, and deserves to be taken notice of by us, to prevent us from security. As in the former Point we were taken off from senselessness and hard-heartedness in regard of others, so in this we are now taken off from stupidity in our own particular: We are taught not to put far from us the evil day, but to reckon and account our selves kill'd, when indeed we are no more but warned. A gracious and ingenuous Child esteems a threatening next to a whipping; and whiles he sees his Brother beaten before him, begins to conclude of himself.

himself. And so should we do, when we see how it happens to our Neighbours, we should think that it is not far from our selves: Indeed, it is that which we are very hardly and difficultly brought unto; as we cannot think our selves smitten in our Brethren, from our Interests and Relations to them; so we cannot think our selves smitten in them neither, from the conjunction we have with them: we never think our selves kill'd, till the Sword does actually wound us; whereas indeed, if we did duly consider it, we are kill'd in all the warnings before hand. All the killings which we have heard of abroad all this while in other places, we might, if we had had such good fore-cast, look'd upon them as killings to us, and warnings which God has given us to prepare against our own visitation; *We have been kill'd.*

This we have good reason to do, and to argue thus with our selves, from a two-fold Consideration: First, From the disposition of Enemies. And secondly, From the usual dealing of God in his Dispensations.

First, For Enemies; they are alike affected to all, make no more of one then of another: And what they have done to others afore us, they are ready, where they have opportunity and ability, to do as much to our selves. They make no difference of any, but all's fish alike with them, in this case, that comes to Net: Therefore where we see them kill others, we may expect no mercy to our selves.

And then secondly, For God Himself; It is the course which he takes in his Providence, where he begins, most commonly to make an end; and where he sets the Cup of trembling a going, ere he has done, to make it come round.

Lastly, In regard of their Cause; *We are kill'd*, even then when as yet we are not medled with, when the cause which we are interested in, is persecuted & pursued. A Christian is not his person, but his principles; neither is he so much to be consider'd what he is for his own particular, as what he is in that which he stands for, and that way which he propounds to himself. When ever it goes ill with Religion, we should think it goes ill with our selves: *Eli*, and his Daughter-in-law after him, could not live whiles the Ark is taken: If the Gospel at any time suffer, certainly we are kill'd, if so be we be those which we should be. A good Christian can live no longer then Christianity it self, if that once suffer any prejudice, or fall to the ground; farewell him together with it, hee's a dead man. It was the speech of the Apostle to the *Thessalonians*, *We live, if you stand fast in the Lord*; We may a little alter the expression, *We live, if the Lord stand fast in us, and keeps amongst us*; if He do not, what will become of us? we do not know. There is no such death and killing to a true godly man, as to think of the sufferings of Religion. *As a killing in my bones are the reproaches of mine enemies, whiles they say daily unto us, where is thy God?* *Psal. 42. 10.* Whiles God's people saw the Cause of Religion at this time to be prejudiced, they might think themselves quite kill'd, though the Sword of the Enemy did not reach them. Thus we see how 'tis possible for the Church to say here *she was kill'd*, and her killing not to take away her complaining. This Complaint, it is made in behalf of the whole Church in general; though the Prophet, and others with him, were alive for their own persons.

And

And thus much now also of the first thing which I propounded to be consider'd in this Complaint: The Affliction it self, *We are kill'd, or put to death.*

The second is the occasion or ground of it, *Enemies, &c.*] These words have a double Emphasis, both of complaint and likewise of boasting, according to the several Scriptures wherein they are: According to the Psalmist, so they are words of complaint: According to the Apostle, so they are words of boasting. We look upon them first, as in the Psalmist, as words of complaint; *We are kill'd for thy sake.*] Which may admit of divers Constructions:

First, As the pretence of the Enemies; *They kill us for thy sake*, that is, they deal thus cruelly with us, and make the world, in the meantime, believe, as if herein they had respect unto thee. Thus in the place before alledged, our Saviour tells his Disciples, *That the time would come, when they that killed them, would think herein they did God good service, Job. 16. 2.* Wicked men are not only content to do a great deal of mischief to God's people, but also are so bold and impudent, as herein to justify themselves for their Obedience to God. Thus *Rabshakeh*, the Messenger of the King of *Assyria* to *Hezekiah*, *Esay 36. 10,* *And now am I come up without the Lord against this Land to destroy it? The Lord said unto me, Go up against this Land to destroy it.* See how he makes God Himself to be a Patron of his Violence and Invasion; *The Lord said to me, Go up.* And so 'tis likewise said to many others of the Enemies of the Church, they have still somewhat to say to justify their own Cruelties and Injuries which they offer to the people of God; *We are killed for thy sake*, that is, In thy Name, that may be one interpretation; but I pass over that.

Secondly, *For thy sake*; that is, for our reference to thee, because we are thy people, and worship thy Name, and profess thy Truth, and have thy Ordinances amongst us: *For this cause we are kill'd*, so that here we have signified to us the occasion of the Churches Persecution, and what it is which makes men to be so violent and furious against them; namely, for no other reason, but because they are the Servants of God. *Therefore they that hate me are many, and increas'd against me: because I follow the thing that good is, Psal. 38. 20.* The main great quarrel and controversie which wicked men have against the Church of God, is indeed (what-ever else be pretended) Religion, and the profession of the Gospel. It has been so in former Ages, *Egyptians, Philistines, Amalekites, &c. vid. Psal. 83. 5, &c.*

This may appear unto us further from these following Considerations:

First, From the condition of the Persons themselves which were employ'd in *killing*; who were they which the Church was now troubled with, Enemies to Religion? It was not only they which were Enemies to them, but also Enemies to God. Those which are Enemies to Religion, they most of all aim at Religion, and strike at that; every one intends that principally which his Profession leads him unto, and which most of all suits with his main and principal end. Now what's the main end of Atheists? but to destroy Religion it self: When Papists fight against Protestants, what do they fight for? for Protestantism,
what

what a senseless thing is this? If we take it for the defending of Protestantism: No, they fight rather for the overthrow and subversion of it; *We are kill'd by thy Enemies, therefore we are kill'd for thy sake.* That's the first, from the condition of the persons *killing*.

Secondly, From the qualification of the Persons themselves which are *kill'd*: It is we, *therefore 'tis for thy sake*: We, in the consideration of the innocency and integrity of our Consciences. This is intimated to us in some verses before the Text in the same Psalm; *All this is come upon us, yet we have not forgotten thee, &c.* What can Gods people suffer for from those which are Gods Enemies, but only for Gods Cause? Consider them in their carriage and behaviour; alas, they are the most harmless people of all other in the world. There's nothing which can be justly and truly excepted against them; we speak not what they are towards God in the strictness of his Judgment, but what they are in regard of men for their observation. Though the Lord Himself may be able to find that in them, which may be sufficient against them; yet it is more then their Enemies can lay hold on: There's nothing which they can fasten on, but only their innocency it self; and if they hate them, and kill them for any thing, it must be as *Cain did Abel*, because their works are better then their own. That's the second; and thus those which are most holy, are most kill'd.

Thirdly, It appears that Gods Cause is the thing which the Enemies aim at in their killing of Gods people, from a consideration of the means and wayes whereby they labour to effect it, and that is by such as are most effectual to the extirpation of Religion it self. When wicked men do at any time set themselves against the Church and people of God, they do not rest themselves contented with those means which are destructive of their particular persons, but also which moreover tend to the overthrowing of the Principles they live by, and such as may make their way and profession to cease in the world: *Come let us cut them off from being a Nation, and that the Name of Israel be no more in remembrance.* These, and the like, do evidence that their bent is at Religion it self, not only at the Persons that profess it.

This now it may give us some account of all the shedding of that Christian blood which is let out in the world, and likewise what to think of those which are the shedders of it. We may see here what's the quarrel which is on foot in every Age, and what it is which Gods people suffer for. In a word, *For thy sake*; that is, for Godliness and Religion: There may be other accidental businesses which are wrapt and involved in it; but this is the main which is intended, and accordingly it becomes us to see it, and take notice of it.

Indeed, It is not alwayes pretended, nor proclaimed in plain terms: Men are grown a little wiser then so, for the odiousness of it; but that it's aimed at, there's none can deny; their Persons, and Projects, and Counsels do speak thus much unto us; and we cannot but be wilfully blind, if we here shut our eyes, and do not perceive it, though not alwayes explicitly, yet implicitly. Therefore I beseech you let us consider it, and think of it, for our own advantage. As God Himself is a jealous God, so his people are a jealous people, and do not alwayes stay till mens malice and fury is drawn out to its measure and perfect height, but do take
it

it (for better security) and at the very first appearances and apprehensions, and do accordingly judge of it. This is most certain and unquestionable, that the thing for which the Enemies kill; It is *thy sake*; and *thy sake* is thy Name, and in reference to thy Cause.

Thirdly, *For thy sake*; We may carry it a little further then so, not only as a complaint, but a confession: Not so much for a complaint of their Enemies, as indeed a complaint of themselves; *We are kill'd for thy sake*, that is, in satisfaction to thy justice; *Who art a just and righteous God, and wilt not suffer sin to be unpunished.* Our Enemies have nothing against us themselves, but they *kill us for thy sake*; that is, to accomplish thy holy Decrees, to bring about thy wise Providence, to fulfil thy righteous Judgments, to visit and avenge the quarrel of thy Covenant. This is the secret ground and reason why our Enemies kill us, though it be not attended to by them. As it is in *Esay 10. 5, 6, 7, Oh Assyria, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is my indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical Nation; and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. Howbeit, he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so, but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off Nations not a few.* Thus whiles the Enemies of the Church do draw forth their own Principles, they further God's gracious intendments, and accomplish his Ends and Purposes. They are Instruments which he acts and uses, as the Executioners of his Divine Justice; and so God's people they are *kill'd for his sake* in this sense. This, it may serve to inform us in all the evils which now befall our selves, and teach us what kind of use at the present to make of them; namely, to enter into our selves, and to be humbled for our several Abominations. As those which provoke the Lord to expose us to the trouble of Enemies, they may have an end to them, but God may have another to Himself; and these two they may very well sute, and accord, and agree together: The Enemy may punish us for Religion, but God may punish us for want of it, and for wantonness in it. And so still upon each account, it is *for thy sake we are kill'd*; though that which is mainly and chiefly to be look'd at by us is the last: Though we are not to neglect the other, but may take notice of it for our own direction; yet the thing which we are to think on, is not so much our suffering for our goodness, as rather our suffering for our sin. This is that which this day now should take the deepest impression upon us, and be most of all meditated by us, as that which is most profitable and beneficial for us.

Certainly, though our Enemies be such as are very deeply enraged against us, yet that which should most affect us is our quarrel & controversie with the Lord; to think that he through their means does reckon with us. In *Psal. 17. 13, 14.* we find such an expression as this, *Deliver my Soul from the wicked, which is thy sword: From men which are thy hand, O Lord.* Wicked men are no other then the Sword and Hand of God; it is he that does now deal with us for all our Corruptions and Miscarriages; our Corruptions in matter of Doctrine, and our Corruptions in matter of Worship; and our Corruptions in matter of Affection, and Practise, and Life, and Conversation. Oh beloved, the Lord has a

F f f f

• very

very great reckoning with us for our abuse of his Gospel, and Ordinances, and Ministers, and People, and Creatures; that we have no more profited under so long means of Salvation, that we have no more thriven in his green and pleasant Pastures, that we have no more been benefited under so many gracious Opportunities: How do we think the Lord could do any other then visit for these things? For our Idolatry, and Superstition, and Profaneness, and Luxury, and Pride, and Uncleaness, and Heresies, and Divisions, and humours in Religion, when so many, and many more might be summed up amongst us: Can we say any other, then that *we are kill'd for thy sake*? that is, in the sense that we speak of, in satisfaction to thy justice, who hast been offended by us.

All these three Interpretations may be fasten'd here upon this expression; *For thy sake*: But that which is here mainly intended, is the second and middle of the three; *For thy sake*, that is, for thy Cause and Truth, because we are such as are careful to approve our selves unto thee, and to do that which is pleasing before thee. Therefore it is that our Enemies are so desperately and maliciously set against us; and therefore it is that they *kill* us, for the Cause and Truth of God: From whence, by the way, we learn thus much, not to trust to the goodness of our cause at any time in our dealings with men; if we do so, we may chance to be mistaken, and may find sometimes our entertainment to be contrary to that which we expected.

And again, for the people of God not to judge of their Cause always by their success: The best Cause in this world may go by the worst, and so likewise the best persons, and those which defend it; *We are killed for thy sake*; though 'tis *thy sake* that we stand for, yet we cannot scape killing notwithstanding.

And so much of these words, as they may be taken under the Emphasis of Complaint, in the words of the Psalmist.

The second is under the Emphasis of Triumph, in the words of the Apostle, and so we have this from it; That the main ground of rejoicing in suffering is the cause we suffer for: Then we have cause of quiet and comfort, when we can say, *'Tis for thy sake*. This was that which here made the Apostle to challenge Sword, and every thing else, because he knew the goodness of his Cause. Another may indure the same evil, in regard of the Affliction it self, and yet not have that confidence in it: *It is not the Punishment makes a Martyr*, we say, *but the Cause*; Matth. 5. 10, 11, 12, *Blessed are they which are persecuted for Righteousness sake, for theirs, &c.* 1 Pet. 3. 14, *But if ye suffer for Righteousness sake, happy are ye, &c.* 1 Pet. 4. 14, 15, *If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye, &c.*

There are two things which are principally to be look'd at in suffering; the one is a good Conscience, and the other is a good Cause.

This it serves as a distinction between Martyrs and Malefactors: The *Garnets* and *Beckets* amongst the Papists, and the *Bradford*s and *Ridley*s amongst our own. The one suffer'd for their Villanies, the other for the Cause of Christ.

 SERMON XLII.

R O M. 8. 36.

(For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.)

There's none which are able so well to bid a challenge to Afflictions and Persecutions, as those which know best what they are, and are most acquainted with them; And those are such in all likelihood, which have had most experience of them; and felt them for their own particular; therefore the Apostle Paul having made that noble defiance to all Calamities, as we saw he had done in the former Verse, that it might appear he did it not rashly, like a Novice that did not understand them, he here informs us, that he had tryal, and experiment of them, For thy sake we are killed; In which words I have already observed to be consider'd two general Parts; First, the Testimony alledged; Secondly, the form of Allegation, &c.

THe Second Emphasis of these words, *For thy sake, &c.* is, as taking them for words of Triumph; the Apostle does here rejoice, and in an holy manner boast in his and other Believers persecutions, and sufferings for Christ. And from hence we have this observation to be consider'd of us at this time; that then we have cause of comfort and joy in our sufferings indeed, when we can say, it is for the cause of God. Hence did the Apostle Paul make a challenge here to the Sword, and every thing else besides, to separate him, if possibly it could from the love of Christ; because it was for the cause of Christ that these evils came upon them: It was not from the Afflictions themselves, which were rather matters of grief; but from the rise and occasion of them. The cause of Christ in our sufferings, is a main ground of our rejoicing both *Emphatically*, and likewise *Exclusively*; and according to both may be consider'd off us, at this time, in the handling of this Point. First, It is so *Emphatically*; that is, there is that in Gods cause which is able to keep up the heart in the greatest sufferings; *For thy sake we are killed*, therefore rejoice. Secondly, It is so *Exclusively*; that is, there is not that in any suffering which is able to keep the heart up, if it be not for the cause of God.

First, Wee'l take it *Emphatically*, and consider it so ; There is that in the cause of God, which is able to keep the heart up in the greatest sufferings : To be kill'd for Gods cause, it is a matter of special triumph, and exceeding rejoycing ; thus the Apostle makes it in this place, and thus have the Saints of God in all ages reckon'd and esteem'd it, and accordingly been affected with it ; they have not had so much sorrow from their Afflictions, as they have had comfort and joy from their cause, and from the person, for whom they have sustain'd all that evil as they have done for God himself. *For thy sake* ; that is, out of love and respect to thee, who hath commanded and required us to suffer, and who art honour'd by our sufferings in thy truth, and the manifestation of thy Graces, which thou hast bestowed upon us. What was the glory of the three Children, which were cast into the fiery furnace ? and what was it made them so resolute and courageous as we see they were ? It was this, *for thy sake* : Love it does usually forget and overcome all difficulties whatsoever ; It puts a sweetness into the greatest hardship which is indured, for the party beloved ; and so does love to God and his Truth, it doth wonderfully oversway : *The love of Christ constrains us*, as the Apostle *Paul* speaks. Look what made Christ himself to indure so much evil for our sakes, the same is that which makes us to indure so much evil for his : What made Christ so willing and chearful in that which he suffer'd ? It was the love which he bare to the Elect, he indured all things for his Elects sake. As *Paul* said of himself, and his love unto them made him to think as it were nothing of them : Even so is it on the other side with us, having his love shed abroad in our hearts, and the reflections of it upon our Spirits ; we are made content to suffer hardness, because it is for his sake, and because it is for his truth, and because it is for his cause. Suffering for Gods sake, it does mitigate the greatest evils that are. This will appear to be so indeed upon these following Considerations.

First, As it is a matter of special Dignity, and Honour, and Renown ; Honour, and the apprehensions of that, it is a business which does carry men on very cheerfully through very great evils, and those which otherwise would sink under them, in this case are sustain'd in them : Now for this purpose, we are to consider thus much : That to suffer in the cause of Christ, is a very great honour, it is an high dignity and privilege which God does reach forth and vouchsafe to that Christian, which he does call to suffer in his cause : This is signified unto us in Philip. 1. 29, *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake* ; where we may observe that suffering for Christ's sake, is by the Apostle called a gift, or if ye will a Privilege and Prerogative ; *ἐξουσία*, the word is in the Text, which signifies a special Grace, and Dignity, and Favour, such as is bestowed upon none but those which are in special account and esteem. Suffering for the cause of Christ, it is comfortable because it is honourable, and the highest honour of all, such as every one has not the privilege to be made partaker of, (though Believers and very good Christians) *To you it is given, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him* : where we must not conceive the Apostle, as comparing the Grace of Faith, and the outward induring of Affliction or trouble one with another ; as if it were
more

more for a man simply consider'd to suffer persecution for Christs sake, than it were to believe in Christs name, for so indeed it is not; The greatest honour that can be is to be a Christian, and Professor of the Gospel in a Prison; but where there is faith already, it is an addition of dignity to the condition, to be a Sufferer as well as a Believer: It is not more intensively, but extensively, as we use to speak in the Schools: To be only a Believer, that's but a single honour; but to be a Martyr or Sufferer for Gods cause, this is double honour, and which does include the other in it: This was that which made the other Apostles to rejoyce so much in this condition, and to count it such an advantage to them; as *Acts 5. 41.* It is said, *They departed from the presence of the Counsel rejoycing, that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his Name.* To suffer shame for Christs Name, they counted it a matter of worth and renown unto them; these two they seem to be opposite and contradictory one to the other; that they should have shame, and yet have honour, but indeed no contradiction at all; for that which was a matter of shame in regard of the world, in regard of God was an advancement. Look as in another sense, *Wicked men do glory in their shame,* as the Scripture speaks; that is, make that a matter of rejoycing, which is rather a matter of reproach: So here do the Children of God; The Apostles also glory in their shame, as it is said also of *Moses, Heb. 11. ver. 26.* *He esteemed reproach for Christ, greater riches then the treasures of Egypt; shame, and reproach, and dishonour for the cause of Christ for Gods sake, is the greatest honour that can be.* This is signified to us expressly, in *1 Pet. 4. 14.* *If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye, for the spirit of Glory, and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.* There is a blessed and glorious Spirit rests upon the heads of those which are persecuted and suffer shame for Christ: Ignominy and reproach it self, is in such turn'd into honour; this made the Apostle, as here in this present Scripture, so elsewhere, *so to glory in his sufferings, I have in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus, We are alwayes delivered to death for Jesus sake.* This is the first Consideration, It is a matter of renown.

Secondly, It is a matter of rejoycing to suffer for Gods sake, because *herein we are made conformable to Christ himself;* This is another thing intimated by the Spirit of God also in Scripture, *1 Pet. 4. 13.* Speaking of the *fiery tryal*, which he would not have seem strange unto them, he gives this reason of it, to incourage them in it, *Rejoyce, in as much as ye are partakers of Christs sufferings:* A Christian is two wayes made partaker of Christs suffering, The one is in regard of the Evils and Afflictions which he suffers: the other is in regard of the occasion, and cause for which he suffers; for the evils as they have done to the Master, in like manner they do to the Servant; and as they have dealt with the Teacher, in like manner do they deal with the Disciple: mockings, and scourgings, and revilings, and derisions. And then for the cause of suffering; as he suffer'd for righteousness sake, so also do we, and in that regard is commended to us an example that we should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, *1 Pet. 2. 22.* And in *1 Pet. 3. 17, 18,* *For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, then for evil doing. For Christ also hath once suffered for*

for sins, the just for the unjust : where we may observe, that Christ is said both to suffer for sin, and for righteousness; for Sin, in regard of us whose Sins were imputed to him; but for Righteousness, in regard of himself, who had no Sin at all chargeable upon him. For Sins in regard of God, who dealt with him as an obnoxious person; but for righteousness in regard of men, who condemn'd the innocent, and the just; the Jews they crucifie Christ for his goodness sake : In which respect we by this means are made conformable to him, when we suffer for the cause of God; And so far forth have hence matter of rejoycing, as it is a great comfort to the members to be made suitable to their head; *Whom he did fore-know, he did predestinate to be conform'd to the Image of his Son*, as it is here in this present Chapter, *Rom. 8. 29.* By suffering for goodness, we conform to the Image of Christ.

And here is a difference now betwixt this suffering, and other suffering in the world, when men suffer in evil causes; here now they are made conformable to the Image of the first *Adam*; but when they suffer in good causes, here now they are made conformable to the Image of the second *Adam*. What was the suffering of the first *Adam*? It was suffering for sin, *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely dye* : *Adam*, he therefore dyed, because he eat of the forbidden fruit, and therein brake the Commandment of God, which had injoynd him the contrary; so that those now, which suffer deservedly for their sins, they conform to his Image; But what was the suffering of the second *Adam*? It was I say for Righteousness sake, in regard of those that inflicted punishment upon him; they found nothing worthy of death in him, and yet condemn'd him : Therefore those that suffer innocently, they are said to conform to his Image, which makes their sufferings so much less. If they have done thus to the green tree, how much more to the dry? If thus to our Lord and Master, we may very well our selves be content.

Thirdly, We hereby come to partake of greater glory hereafter; suffering in a good cause, has the promise of a good reward, and has amends made it for time to come in another place, *Matt. 5. 11, 12,* *Blessed are they which are persecuted for Righteousness sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven; Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake: Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.* Mark, great is your reward in Heaven, *whiles ye are spoken evil of for my Names sake*; They lose nothing at all by it, which suffer any thing for Gods cause, and Heaven, it will make them full amends; and this shall be in a great measure bestowed upon them.

This (for the use of it) may teach us with patience to submit to providence in this respect: whenever any evil befalls us for the cause of God, and his truth, not to be troubled, or dismayed at it; we have no cause of repenting, but of rejoycing, when at any time we suffer thus: Although perhaps in regard of Nature, and Flesh, and Blood, it may be troublesome to us; yet in reference to Christian considerations, we have much ground of upholding; and that in all the particulars, which I have already mention'd unto you: It's honourable, it's comfortable, it's comely, it's glorious, and full of renown, leading to eternal bliss and

and happiness in another world. And we should draw out all the sweetness and comfortableness of these considerations, to make us so much the more comfortable in such conditions, we should labour to get our hearts fully perswaded off them, that so we may have benefit by them, when the time of our suffering shall come.

And thus it is true Emphatically; That suffering for Gods sake is a matter of joy and rejoycing, *we are kill'd*: therefore glory in this our Tribulation.

Secondly, We may take it Exclusively; *For thy sake we are killed*, and that is for thy cause, and nothing else: From whence we have this observable, that there is not any thing in suffering which can comfort the heart for it self, except it be for Gods cause; It is not the punishment, but the cause which makes the Martyr: This is another thing included in this Expression; and it may be illustrated and confirm'd unto us, from all those places of Scripture, which do put a special Emphasis here-upon, as *Matth. 5. 10. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake. 1 Pet. 3. 14, If ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye. 1 Pet. 4. 15, If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, Matth. 10. 18, Ye shall be brought before Governours, and Kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.* And in the same Chapter 39, *He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.* In all which places, and the like, which might be brought to the same purpose; we see that the Holy Ghost does no further set a price upon suffering persecution, then as it is for the cause of God. And indeed if we set aside this, there is nothing in it at all, which can afford any matter of rejoycing.

First, There is nothing from flesh and blood, for this it is most contrary unto; there's no persecution, or affliction, but nature has a quarrel against it, and is opposite to it: For men to be meerly killed, what comfort can they have in this? No, it is *for thy sake*, which puts a price and valuation upon it, and it is that, which does do it so, as nothing else can. It is not credit, nor honour, nor the esteem of men, which can make it up; It is not stomach, nor humour, nor fancy, which can here make amends; It is not company, nor example, nor presidents will here serve the turn. Alas, there is none of all these, but the evil it self is very far and transcendently above them; for a man to lose either his life, or his ease, or his liberty upon such considerations as these are, is a very sad and lamentable condition, and such as will be able at last to give him no satisfaction at all: For a man to say, I have lost my estate, or I have ventur'd my liberty, or I have endanger'd my life in a bravado; Alas beloved, there is not that in it which will quit cost; there is more evil in the trespassing upon Nature, than there is contentment in this argument thereunto; but now to say, I did it for Religion, for Gods glory and the good of my Soul; here's that now which will satisfy and give a man abundance of content in the midst of the greatest misery. There is nothing but the comforts of Christianity, which can make amends for the dispensations with nature: He that denies himself in any thing here below, and does not do it out of principles from above; he does not get, but lose by the bargain: He deprives himself of so much comfort and sweetness, which he might otherwise partake of in the Creature; and besides, at the last, he shall have no thanks for his labour;

labour; all which will be said to him is this, who has required these things at your hand? you might have chosen whether you would have done so, or no; But now when he shall do it for Christs sake, he shall not lose his reward, *He that loses his life for my sake, shall save it.*

Again further, In the second place, as out of this there's no comfort in suffering; so indeed there is a great deal of discontent, when a man shall reflect and enter into his Conscience, and find that he does not suffer for Gods cause, he will have a very sad reckoning to make of it, when he shall give up his accounts to God: Every rash sufferer, is upon the point a self-Murderer. *He that's killed, and not killed for thy sake, he kills himself*, he has his amends in his own hand, and it may be said in this case to him, as David said once to the Amalekite, *Thy blood be upon thine own head*; which when a man shall duely consider, is a thing which has cause to go near him, and to lye very heavy upon him. God has made every man (as I may say) his own keeper, intrusted himself with himself, and committed to him both the care of his life, as likewise of all other blessings and comforts which are attendant thereupon; and therefore it concerns every one to consider upon what terms at any time he gives them up, and parts with them, for God will certainly one day call him to reckoning and an account for it: As we are accountable to God for our lives, and other mercies, how we enjoy them; so we are likewise accountable to him for the same mercies, how we resign them; and as God takes it very unkindly from us, that we should stick to part with any thing in his cause, when he requires it, and asks for it at our hands; so on the other side, he takes it as offensively, that we should throw away any thing from us, which he is pleas'd at any time to give us, and not for his sake.

The sum of all comes to this, that in all our sufferings and afflictions, we have a special eye to this; that we suffer for righteousness, that we suffer for well-doing, that we suffer for the cause of God: It is a point which had need alwayes to be studied, but especially in these suffering times, which are now come upon us; *Take heed of suffering as an evil doer*, remember that, and think if we do so, we can have little comfort in suffering, but much of the contrary: Resolve thus, if we should be kill'd, to be kill'd for Gods sake, or not at all; and there are three things for our better understanding of this point, which do concur hereunto, whereof the first indeed is not in our power, but the other two are: There are three particular considerations, which do make our sufferings and persecutions to be said to be for Gods sake: First, The intent of the Enemy we suffer from. Secondly, The Nature of the thing we suffer for: And Thirdly, The disposition of the Spirit we suffer with: All or either of these may thus denominate our sufferings.

First, The Intent of the Enemies which we suffer from; we then suffer in this sense for Gods sake; when they shall impose such evils and sufferings upon us in reference to God, because we are professors of Religion, and maintain the cause of God, whether we do it heartily or no. It is thus far a suffering for Gods sake, because the Enemy, he looks at God in it, whether men suffer as Christians, or Hypocrites, in regard of their own hearts; yet notwithstanding they may suffer for Gods sake in regard of the Enemy, because he knows not how to distinguish;
and

and does not look at the person according to his particular qualification; but according to his general undertaking of such a cause, now suffering for Gods cause in this sense, it is not properly any matter of commendation, which we have in hand.

But Secondly, We may be said to suffer for Gods sake; from the nature of the thing it self, which we suffer for; This now, it comes a little nearer, a man suffers for Gods sake, when he suffers for well doing: Not only in the apprehension of the Enemy, but likewise in the thing it self. This is a thing which every one is concern'd to inform himself in, to see that the ground of his suffering be just and lawful, that he suffer not for doing any thing amiss, but that which is right, for well-doing, and not for evil, and for his Graces and Vertues; not his Sins. This was the difference in the sufferings of our Blessed Saviour, and those that suffered with him: It was the observation of the good Thief on the Cross, which he urged to this purpose from his fellows, *Luk. 23. 41. We indeed suffer justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss*: Every one should look to this in their suffering, that they suffer not as a due reward of their deeds; that he which is their Enemy and Persecutor be not (in providence) their Executioner, and Revenger, and a Punisher of their miscarriage. Now for this, that we may also understand it, it may be two manner of wayes: A man may suffer for his evil deeds, and so not suffer for Gods sake, in two respects especially; either first of all, when that which he suffers for shall be in its own Nature sinful: Or secondly, Though not sinful in it self, yet mingled, and involved with somewhat besides, which is sinful.

First, When it is sinful in it self; he that suffers thus, does not suffer for Gods sake; let an Enemy be never so violent, and outrageous in regard of his carriage; yet if he should follow us for that which were sinful, we could have no comfort in it: we are thus far approveable, when our cause is just and warrantable; as for example, when we shall not suffer for the false Religion, but for the true: Not for violating and wounding our Conscience, but rather for doing that which is our duty, and lyes upon us to do; whenever we do thus, we suffer for Gods sake, because we suffer for our obedience unto God: But if the ground and matter be unlawful, we then suffer not for him, but for our selves.

Again Secondly, As when it is sinful in the thing; so likewise when it is mingled and involved with any sinful circumstances, we do not properly suffer for God, except we suffer *every way* for God: Though our cause should be right for the main, and the general consideration of it; yet if it should be blemish'd with the adherence of some particular weakness and infirmity, it would from hence receive a disparagement and prejudice upon it: I do not say such, as which God might not graciously pardon, and pass by, and bear with; but yet such as wherein we our selves could not have that comfort and contentment and satisfaction as otherwise we might, when together with Gods cause we shall mix and mingle our own; our lusts, and our passions, and our indiscretions, and our sinister respects; in such a case as this is, we do much prejudice our sufferings, and do take off this holy triumph, which the Apostle Paul had in himself, and others with him, *For thy sake we are killed*:

G g g g

And

And that's the Second thing which has an influence upon our suffering for Gods sake, when we suffer in a good and just cause.

Thirdly, We are said to suffer for Gods sake, according to the Disposition of the Spirit we suffer with : That is, when we have a pure respect to Gods glory in our suffering. There is a great deal of difference to be made between suffering *in* the cause of God, and suffering *for* the cause of God : A man may suffer *in* Gods cause when he is accidentally, and upon some other respects ingaged in such a cause as proves at once both to be the cause of God, and the cause of suffering, then we suffer for Gods cause, when we own Gods cause in suffering : But a man does not suffer *for* Gods cause, except he have an eye and particular aim at God himself *in* his suffering, and intend to honour and glorifie God *by* his suffering ; this is another thing which does conduce and tend hereunto, which is to be consider'd also by us in this particular, In 1 Cor. 13. 3. *Though I should give my body to be burnt, sayes the Apostle, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing* : Charity, what's the meaning of that ? That is, a love to God, and his cause, in the induring of this affliction ; Martyrdom is not Martyrdom from the outward pain which is indured, but from the inward affection which puts us upon the induring of it.

But have not some been very glorious in suffering, when they have not suffer'd for Gods sake ? Many Heathens and Hereticks, and Malefactors, and such as these : Has not many a Jesuit dyed upon the Gallows with some triumph, and exaltation of Spirit.

Yes, they have sometimes at least in outward appearance ; for as the Devil (as we use to say) is Gods Ape, so does Nature imitate Grace, and the false Religion the true. Such as these (it cannot be denyed) have sometimes had some lightenings in them, but it has not been that Spiritual joy which a Christian is partaker of : It has been such and no more than common principles could put into them, and sometimes base principles ; Policy, and Hypocrisie, and Vain-glory, and worldly respects joyn'd with the advantage of natural courage, and Spirit, have prevailed much hereunto ; but this is far from the disposition of the Apostle Paul here in this place, and other Believers with him, whose joy was the joy of the Holy Ghost, unspeakable, and glorious, founded in the goodness of his cause, and Spirit which he suffer'd with ; and that upon good grounds. And this is the second particular ; The ground or occasion of these sufferings, *For thy sake*.

The third particular in these words, is the extent and continuance of the Persecution ; *All the day long* : There are two things observable of us from this expression, which may seem at first opposite to one another, but in the handling we shall easily reconcile them ; First, here's the shortness of its continuance : This Persecution it lasts but for a day : And Secondly, here's the length of its continuance, this persecution it lasts the whole day, we are kill'd but for a day, and we are *killed all the day long* ; take notice of both.

First, I say, but for a day ; it pleases the Spirit of God to set forth to us the Churches persecution, under an expression of short continuance ; it is not a week, or a month, or a year, but only a day ; it is but one day and we have done. Though it be grievous, and troublesome for the time,

time, yet that time it does not last long ; it will by little and little wear over and pass away ; This is signified not only here, but in other places. In the 18 Verse of this Chapter, *Rom. 8.* It is call'd (for contraction sake) *the suffering but of this present time.* In *2 Cor. 4. 17.* It's call'd *our light affliction but for a moment ;* In *Rev. 3. 10.* It is called *but the hour of temptation ;* In *Heb. 10. 37.* It is call'd *but a very little while.* In *1 Pet. 16.* It's call'd *but a short season.* Here in this Scripture before us, it is call'd *but a day.* All, I say, to signifie to us the shortness and smallness of its continuance, that we shall not be long troubled with it ; it is the gracious promise which God has made, *Psal. 125. 3. That the rod of the ungodly, shall not rest upon the lot of the Righteous ;* He does not say it shall be wholly kept off, so as not to come at all upon them ; but it shall not lye, *and rest on them ;* they shall feel it, but not over-long, God will in his own due time take occasion for the removal of it. In *Matth. 24. 22.* The dayes of tribulation are said to be shorten'd and contracted ; Days which are cut off by the ends, and they are so for the Elects sake ; *For the Elects sake, those dayes shall be shorten'd,* in order and respect unto them for their comfort ; God cares not how long his Enemies meet with trouble and affliction upon them, but for his Children, he is tender of them, he will not alwayes be chiding, neither does he remember his anger for ever.

That which is here express'd by one day, is in another place express'd by more, but all comes to the same purpose and effect, to signifie that it is but for a while ; as in *Rev. 2. 10, Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer ; Behold the Devil shall cast some of you into prison that ye may be tryed, and ye shall have tribulation ten dayes :* There 'tis said ten dayes, here 'tis said but for one ; but all I say, comes to the same ; it shews that it is a limited time, it has its bounds and prescriptions, and it shews that it is but for a short time, it will not abide long. Thus is the persecution of the Church set forth unto us, as *Athanasius* said of *Julian, Nubecula cito transitura,* a little cloud which will quickly vanish away, and be gone in a very moment ; *a day of tryal, and a day of trouble, and a day of visitation, &c.* They are the expressions of Scripture. The Consideration of this should work us to a Spirit of patience and contentation under the fierie tryal ; it should keep us from being ready to murmur, and repine under the hand of God in this regard ; *we are killed,* but it is but for a day ; remember that, indeed we are ready to think this day to be long, but it is rather so in our thoughts, than in the thing it self ; especially, if we shall consider the day of Gods waiting for us, and striving with us, and patience towards us ; then our day of affliction & persecution is but a little while indeed, the time of our suffering, it is nothing to the time of our sinning, nor the time which God has spared us before he began to deal with us, this it has been very long, and protracted and drawn out unto us. The day of Gods patience and forbearance, that's like a Summers-day to us ; it is fair, and pleasant, and long ; but the day of Gods punishment of us, that's like a Winters-day to us ; it's foul and rainy, but short, which should make us so much the more contented with it.

When evils are at any time upon us, as we see they are now at this present, we think they'll never be gone, through our impatient disposi-

tion ; but we should learn in this case to submit to the providence of God , in the humbling of our selves for our Sins , the turning of our wayes to God , and the use of all good means, we should quietly and meekly indure what he layes upon us, and know that it is but for a time, and these things shall be mended with us. That's the first thing, which we may here take notice of in this Expression of the trouble and persecution of the Church, and People of God, the shortness of its continuance; *It is but for a day.*

The Second is the Extent of its continuance, as it is but a day, so it is a whole day, all the day long ; we must observe and take notice of that : And under this Expression, we have three things intimated unto us : First, Here's the continuance of the Affliction. Secondly, Here's the unweariedness of the Enemy. Thirdly, Here's the Patience of the Saints.

First, The continuance of the Affliction ; *An whole day.*] This it does denote unto us thus much, how that the Afflictions of the People of God, they do stay, and abide upon them their appointed time ; God has set down with himself a day, and certain time, wherein he will visit his People, and this they must expect and be content with patience to submit themselves to. Persecution, though it be but for a *short time*, yet it shall last for *its appointed time*, that it shall do ; It's but a day, but withall it's an *whole day* ; that we must make account of. Indeed this day for the precise and particular time of it is different to several persons, and places ; as ye know it is in the dayes of the year, they are different to several Countreys and Climates ; some they have day a greater while, and a great deal longer than others have ; but all they have their set seasons, even so is it here, the day of one Churches persecution, that may be but so long, the day of anothers may be longer ; but all of them they have their set course and period of time, which they are sure to attain unto. The length of every ones day in this particular is extended according to the work which is to be done in it. God proportions the day to the employment ; great and long-continued corruptions, require great and long persecutions to eat them, and wear them out. Sturdy humours had need of strong Physick, and the Physicking of a long time to purge them away ; God loves to do his work to purpose, and not by halves, as we many times do : And all day is little enough for the curing of some kind of Sickneses and Diseases which we are troubled withall.

This Expression here all the day long, it may be understood either of the Church in general, or else of every Christian and Member of the Church in particular.

First, It may be refer'd to the whole Church in general, in whose person both the Psalmist and the Apostle may be conceived to speak in this place ; and so it does signifie no more but thus much unto us, that the state of Gods Church here below, it is nothing else but a state of persecution ; it is true, it shall not be long here, but for a day, no more but so ; but yet this day it is full of trouble and sorrow, but from the beginning of it to the end ; take the Church and People of God from the time of *Abel* to the last Martyr, and *they are killed all the day long* ; that is, they are in a state of Affliction and Persecution : Hence 'tis called the Church

Church militant, the Church which is continually in fight, and bearing Arms; because for the time which it runs out here in this world, it does do so; Though such a particular Church may have for a time a particular dispensation to be freed from persecution; yet take the Church in its latitude and extent, and so it is not; in its latitude of place, as it is dispers'd through the world, so, it is not free thus; for if it be free in one place; yet it is troubled and molested in another, and in its latitude of time from the beginning of the world to the conclusion; so it is not free neither thus: But as it has been persecuted formerly, so also it is persecuted still, if it could have avoided it in one age, yet it should be sure to have had it in another.

Secondly, As it may be refer'd to the whole Church taken collectively; so also to every Christian distributively; there is no man which takes upon him Christianity, but is kill'd, as I have formerly explained it, all the day long; that is, from the time of his first conversion to his death; either by way of sympathy, in partaking of the killings of others, or by way of danger, being exposed, and lyable to killing; or by way of preparation of mind, as being fitted and disposed thereunto; or else by Actual induring of killing in his own person.

And these things laid together, do serve to take us off from security, and ease, and promising our selves liberty, whiles we live in this vale of tears; yea, it confutes the vain opinion of the Papists, which make prosperity to be a note of the Church; to which usually, there is nothing more contrary, as is here signified to us: That's the first thing implied, the continuance of the Affliction.

The second is the unweariedness of the Enemy, *All the day long*; It is a sign that they are not spent nor tired out in this Execution; They kill, and take no respite between, it's without any intermission, wicked men are never weary of doing mischief to the people of God. As it is said concerning Drunkards, *Esay 5. 11, They rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink, and they continue till night, till the wine do inflame them.* As those, for the drinking of Wine; so these, they are never weary of it: and that upon this account.

First, Because its natural to them; it is a business which they are carried unto, by their proper inclinations, Actions which are Natural are unwearied. The Eye it is not weary of seeing, nor the Ear is not weary of hearing, nor the Pulse is not weary of beating; because all these are natural to them: Indeed the eye may be weary of poring, that is of intending the sight too far; but of seeing it is never weary, because 'tis natural: Even so are not wicked men weary of killing, they are then in their proper Element, when they are butchering of the people of God, their principles carry them hereunto; they do it of themselves, as 'tis said of the Devil, when he lyes, he speaks of his own, it's peculiar and natural to him; so is this to the Enemies of the Church, which makes them do it continually: They are no more weary of killing, than the Sun is weary of shining, or the Fire of burning, or the waters of flowing, they do it naturally; therefore they do it unweariedly: That's the first.

Secondly, It is delightful to them, that's another account of it; those things which are pleasing, are unwearied: where men have a delight

light in any thing, they can follow it all the day long ; what's the reason that many people are no more conscionable in keeping of the Sabbath, in the sanctifying of the Lords-day ; or if they keep it in part of the day, yet they keep it not all the day long : If they conform to the Publick Ordinances, yet it may be neglect the private Performances : If they be at Church it may be in the Morning, are in the Fields in the Afternoon : what's the reason (if a man should ask) of all this ? why, 'tis this, and this alone, because they do not make the Sabbath a delight, as the Prophet *Esay* speaks, where men have a delight in any thing, they can follow it all the day long ; and the longest day that is, its little enough to follow it, borrow of others, yea, of the night to make it up : why thus 'tis now with wicked men in persecuting of the Church, they do it continually, because they do it contentedly ; They kill all the day long, because killing it's pleasing to them.

Thirdly, They are unwearied in this business ; because they have very good help and assistance to further them in it, many hands they use to make light work, where the burden lyes all upon one, or some few, it's easie to be weary : But where are variety to promote it, here they may do it all the day long : Thus 'tis now in the persecution of the Church, where one has at any time done, another steps up in his room, and carries it on with the former violence.

Well, This teaches us what to do in this condition : If they kill all the day long, we should pray all the day long ; pray continually, as they kill continually : And that's the second thing, *The unweariedness of the Enemy.*

The Third is the patience of the Saints, *Kill'd all the day long* ; who could ever indure that ? yes, there where God gives help and strength to bear it, men may be able to do it. And so was the Church here, she did not faint under continual Tribulations : Here's now the great faith, and constancy, and patience of the Saints : There are many which can sometimes come off to the bearing of a little trouble at first, which they hope will soon be over, but let it come to any abode, and continuance, and duration, here they give out : yea, but the Church here in this place, she was able to hold out to the last ; *Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of life* : This has been the Heroical Excellency of some of the Ancient Martyrs, that they have even wearied out their Tormentors : Though (as I shewed in the former particular) it is a thing which they are seldom brought to, to be weary of shedding blood ; yet there is record in story of some Persecutors which have been tired out by the Martyrs : The poor Saints, and people of God have been more constant, and strengthen'd in suffering, than they have been in inflicting.

There are some which would urge this Patience so far, as to turn it into stupidity and senselessness, that the Saints should suffer themselves to be kill'd, and stand still, where they have power to defend themselves, and let their Enemies cut their throats, without any resistance or opposition ; but this is more than can be proved from this place ; yea, the contrary seems to be implied, by the annexed similitude : Grace, it destroys corrupted Nature, but it does not destroy created Nature ; it's contrary to carnal reason, but it is not contrary to common reason which teaches every

every thing (except in reference to the community and publick good, where the particular still gives way to the general, or some positive express'd Command from God requiring the contrary) I say, except in such cases, teaches every thing to maintain it self, and to stand upon its own preservation, against that which would destroy it; the People of God were here kill'd, and kill'd all the day long, yea, and suffered this killing patiently; but this patience it was a patience towards God, without any murmuring, in submitting to *his* Providence; not a patience towards men in lying down under their cruelty without any resistance, which ye may see by the 9th Verse of the 44 Psalm, *Thou hast cast us off, and put us to shame, and goest not forth with our Armies.*

And thus much also of the third Particular, and that is the extent of this Persecution in these words, *All the day long*: The fourth and last is the amplification of all the rest, in these words, *We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

SERMON



SERMON XLIII.

R O M. 8. 36.

(For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.)

Souldiers love to talk of their wounds, and the Dangers and Difficulties they have gone through in such and such cases: And so do Christians of their Crosses and Afflictions which have befallen them in the world; not in a way of fondness, and glory, and self-ostentation, but for two reasons especially: The one, hereby more to settle and confirm themselves; And the other, hereby more to hearten and encourage others. Thus does the Apostle Paul here in this Text which we have here again before us, he strengthens both himself and others in the assurance of the love of Christ, notwithstanding all Persecutions, from those, which he with others had hitherto endured; As it is written, For thy sake, &c.

THe fourth and last Particular is the amplification of the former Complaint; *We are accounted, &c.* Which words do further set forth to us the abominable and intollerable malice of the Enemies and Persecutors of the Church against the Saints and People of God. And there are three things which are intimated and implied in this expression, being applied to the Enemies of the Church. These words, *We are, &c.* may be understood three manner of ways:

First, By way of Designation; *They count us as sheep for the slaughter,* that is, they resolve upon our destruction. They do as absolutely determine to destroy us, as if we were made for no other end and purpose.

Secondly, By way of Expectation; *They count us as sheep for the slaughter;* that is, they make sure of our destruction; they do as verily make account we shall be destroyed, as men make account of sheep to be destroyed, which they have by them in the slaughter-house to that intent.

Thirdly, By way of Estimation; that is, scorn and contempt; *They count us as sheep for the slaughter,* that is, they make no reckoning of our destruction:

destruction: It is no more with them to kill and destroy us, then it is for a cruel and hard-hearted Butcher to cut the throat of a poor innocent sheep. All these several intimations may be conceived, as hinted in this expression.

First, By way of Designation, they have determin'd and appointed us hereunto. Thus 'tis with those who are Enemies to the Saints and People of God; they resolve, if they can, to destroy them: It is that which they do chiefly project and resolve on, and propound to themselves, to make an utter riddance of them. Look as sheep which are for slaughter, men do not think with themselves to keep them, and preserve them, but to kill them, and eat them; even so do these wicked Enemies with Gods Servants and People; they do destine and devote them to destruction. Thus in this *Psalm 44. 11*, *Thou hast given us like sheep appointed for meat, and hast scattered us among the Heathen, like sheep appointed for meat.* So in *1 Cor. 4. 9*, *God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as men appointed to death,* *imbrutia* *1 Thess. 3. 3*, *That no man should be moved by these Afflictions, for your selves know that we are appointed thereunto.* There is a double appointment and designation of the Children of God to these Persecutions: The one in the Counsel of God, which is chiefly intended in that place of the *Thessalonians*; and the other in the mind of men, which are their Enemies, and vow their destruction. This is that which we may see proved and made good to us in divers examples: Thus *Jezebel* resolv'd concerning *Elijah*, she sends a Messenger to him, *1 King. 19. 2*, *The gods do so to me, and more also, if I make not thy life like the life of one of them,* (i. e. of Baals Priests whom he had slain) *by to morrow this time.* Thus *Jehoram* resolved concerning *Elisha*, *God do so to me, and more also, if the head of Elisha, the son of Shaphat, shall stand on him this day.* Thus *Haman* resolved concerning the Jews; It was the Complaint there of *Esther* to the King, *Esther 7. 4*, *We are sold, I and my people to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish.* Thus the Jews resolved concerning *Paul*, *Act. 23. 12*, *There were more then forty of them which had bound themselves under a Curse, that they would neither eat nor drink, till they had kill'd him.* Thus have the people of God in all Ages been appointed to slaughter, as sheep to be kill'd. The reason of it is this, because wicked men look upon God's people as an unprofitable and pestilent Generation. There's two things in it considerable; they look upon them as unprofitable, as those which there's no use of in the world; and they look upon them as troublesome, which do a great deal of mischief in the world: And either of these considerations do give ground to them, to vow their destruction.

First, I say, they look upon them as unprofitable, as a people of whom there's no use or good comes at all: Creatures which are unprofitable, you know we use to dispatch and destroy. We think we may have more benefit by them when they are dead, then when they are alive; why thus now do ungodly men most commonly look upon the Saints, they think them the most useless, and the most needless Creatures that are. There are none which they think could be better mist and spared, then the Generation of God's Children; though indeed they be the Pillars of the Earth, such as serve to sustain and uphold it; yea, and keep off many an evil from those which offer violence to them;

H h h h

yet,

yet, for the most part, they think they could best of all be without them.

But secondly, As they look upon them as unprofitable, and so destroy them for that; so withall they look upon them as troublesome and pernicious, and destroy them for that: It's ordinary and familiar with them, to impute all the mischief that falls out to them as the causes. As in times past, in the dayes of *Cyprian*; (for which reason he writ a *Treatise* to the contrary.) The Heathens laid all the evils which were in the world, upon the backs of the Christians: They still gave out, that they were the causes and occasions of them. Even so do the Enemies still, if there be any thing that crosses or troubles them, they are still jealous and suspicious of the Faithful which are in the Land. And therefore as we use to do with Creatures which are not only unprofitable, but hurtful, Serpents, and Wolves, and Tygers, we do all we can to destroy them, and rid our selves of them. Even so in like manner do such as these to the Servants of God, resolve all they can to devour them. As they said in the *Acts* of *Paul*, *Away with such a Fellow from the Earth, for it is not fit he should live.* This was the argument which *Tertullus* used against him to *Felix*, *We have found this man a pestilent Fellow, and mover of sedition amongst all the Jews throughout the World*; therefore do thus and thus with him.

This, it may therefore teach us what to think of the Enemies of the Church, what to expect from them, and accordingly how to carry our selves to them; namely, as those, which if they could, would by their good will utterly undo us, and destroy us, and make an end of us: Such as in the midst of all their fawnings, and dawblings, and pretences of friendship, do but count us *as sheep for the slaughter*, and would quickly shew it, if they had but opportunity attended. Charity is an excellent quality, if it hit upon the right string; but in the mistake it is not charity, but folly. It is good to judge of men by their fruits, and their actions, and that which comes from them, which is a very clear and full discovery of that which they are for their affections; and will give an account of them here in the midst of all contrary semblance. And this is the first way whereby these words may be understood; namely, by way of designation; *They count us as sheep for the slaughter*, that is, they resolve on our destruction.

Secondly, By way of expectation; *They count us as sheep for the slaughter*, that is, they make sure of our destruction; they do verily and fully make account to see us destroyed. This is another thing implied in this expression; look as when men have sheep in the slaughter-house, which they have led and brought thither to that purpose; they make account they have them at command, and can take away their lives at their pleasure, when they list. Even so do the Enemies of God's people, of the Church of God, they conclude them for dead men. This may appear sometimes by their threatnings and fearful comminations; As *Paul* before he was an Apostle, whiles he was a Persecutor and Enemy of the Church, he is said to breath out threatnings and slaughter against the Disciples of the Lord: To breath out threatnings and slaughters; that is, to fright and astonish them with what great matters he would do against them. Thus it was with *Rabshakeh* to *Hezekiah*,

Hezekiah, in *Esay* 36. 12. and so forward; we may see there what big words he speaks for the discomfiting of the people of God, and how confident he was of destroying them.

The reason of it is this: First, Because they would very fain have it so: That which men desire, they believe; they could wish with all their hearts that they could deal thus with God's people, and therefore they think they shall deal so; they have devoted them to destruction in their appointment, and therefore think they shall be destroyed in their conceit.

And then secondly, Because most commonly they judge according to outward appearance. There if the world see the Church to be a weak, and feeble, and helpless Generation; and therefore conclude them to be such as they shall easily master and subdue, and have the better and victory of. As *Rabshakeh* there in that place, in his disdainful reproach of *Hezekiah*, thou sayest, but they are but vain words, *I have counsel and strength for the war, now on whom dost thou trust? &c.* The great Ones of the world think all the wit and strength is theirs, not in the mean time considering *how the Lord is the strength of his people, and the salvation of those that trust in him.*

And then thirdly, The Lord does also infatuate them, and give them up to their own imaginations and vain conceits many times. He leads them in a fools paradise, and suffers them to delude themselves, that so he may the more easily destroy them, and confound them, when time serves. Certainly, it could not possibly be, that wicked men should run on so desperately upon the ruine of the Church of God, with so much confidence, and boldness, and madness, as many times they do, if God do not give them to delusions and destructive believing of lyes, that he might the more hasten their own: Those which are void of will, are many times full of hope; and those whom God means to destroy, he first infatuates. That's the second thing, by way, namely, of expectation; *They count us as sheep, &c.* that is, they make sure of our Destruction.

Thirdly and lastly, Which I conceive is principally intended in a way of scorn and contempt: *They count us as sheep for the slaughter*; that is, they make no reckoning of our Destruction. They make no more of killing us, then a Butcher would do of killing a sheep; the death of God's people is very cheap with God's Enemies, take notice of that, that may be the point of Observation, which we may gather and draw from these words; and it is that which may be abundantly confirm'd to us, as by daily and continual experience; so by Scripture and ancient experience: Look into the Book of God, almost in every page of it, and ye shall find this truth made good unto you. *St. Paul* professes of himself and other Christians, *How they were made as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things to this day, 1 Cor. 4. 13.* *The filth and the off-scouring*; *Christ* himself was valued but at *thirty pieces of silver*; a goodly price they gave for him, as *Zechary* speaks: The Disciples, our Saviour tells them, *Their enemies would think they merited in killing them.* And so it is still to this hour with other men of the same dispositions. This cheapness of the death of God's Servants with wicked and ungodly men, may be seen in these

particulars : First, In their readines to procure it. Secondly, In their unmercifulness in doing it. Thirdly, In their remorselesness, when it is done. All these do shew what little account they make of it.

First, I say, their readines to procure it : That which men have any esteem or account of, they are very chary how they set themselves about it. They do not without a great deal of difficulty, and reluctance, and unwillingness undertake it. It was an admirable self-denial in *Abraham*, and the argument of very strong Faith and Obedience in him, that he went so chearfully and readily (upon God's Command) to the slaying of his Son, a thing which in a natural way could not be otherwise then troublesome to him, and therefore in all likelihood should have found many a drawing-back in him. There where the death of any one is precious, they do not easily procure it themselves; but now for the death of the Saints, in regard of those which are their Enemies, a small matter will perswade them to effect it; nay, they are earnest and greedy upon it; they watch all advantages and opportunities how to compass it, and they are never well till they have wrought it and brought it about. There's a great deal of proneness and forwardness in wicked men to make an end of the Saints, as we may see an example to this purpose in wicked *Doeg*, in 1 *Sam.* 22. 17, 18. When *Saul* there commanded the footmen that stood about him to slay the Priests of the Lord. *Abimelech*, and the rest of them, for their favour and curtesie to *David*, they were backward and unwilling to do it; but *Doeg*, he spake but to him, and he did it without any more ado, presently without any contradiction : It is said he turn'd and fell upon them, and slew of them in one day 85 persons that did wear a linnen Ephod. See here, he did it out of hand, and at the very first motion, such a readines and forwardness there was in him : And so is it likewise with others of the same stamp with him, bloody Executioners of God's people, a small matter makes them to do it. *Herod* could but give a word for the head of *John the Baptist*, it is presently brought to him in a Platter. These Enemies they do it readily, they are not long ere they set themselves about it; that's one thing whereby they discover how cheap such mens deaths are with them.

Secondly, Their unmercifulness in the doing of it; that's another discovery, where malice or heat may haply make men active in undertaking, yet bowels and good nature does a little work upon them in transacting; and when they come to the business it self, they do somewhat withdraw. But now these Enemies of the people of God, they have no bowels nor compassion towards them; no more bowels to a Christian, then a Butcher has to a Lamb : As they care not for taking away their lives, so they care not neither in what cruelty and savageness they do it. This is here added to the former, in this phrase and expression before us; They had said, they were kill'd before; For thy sake we are killed all the day long. Now they add moreover, We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter; to signify the manner of their killing, and the cruelty which is used against them in such Executions; *Prov.* 12. 10, The righteous man is merciful to his beast, but the very mercies of the wicked are cruelty. A righteous and a tender-hearted person, if he have occasion to take away life from the Creature; he does it not without some kind

kind of tenderness, and pitifulness, and difficulty in him ; His very cruelties (as one might say) are mercies. But now a wretched and ungodly enemy, when he comes to take away the life of a Saint, he does it without any compassion, or bowels, or tenderness at all ; his very mercies in this case are cruelties. In *Ezay* 47. 6. The Lord saith, *He was wroth with his people, he polluted his Inheritance, and gave them into the hands of the Babylonians their enemies, and they shewed them no mercy, but laid a very heavy yoke upon the ancient.* The Churches enemies are enemies without mercy ; we need not go far for examples, we have enough amongst our selves in these latter dayes of the World. Look but upon our Brethren in *Ireland*, their sufferings which they have met withall there, and see if the people of God have been otherwise in their Enemies account, *then only as sheep for the slaughter* ; what butcheries and cruelties have been exercised amongst those poor people ? And so in all Ages before, in the dayes of *Queen Mary*, the Persecution which was amongst us then : how were the Servants of God then drag'd and drawn to the stake, as beasts to the place of destruction, without any pity, without any mercy, without any respect at all. This has been the entertainment which God's people have found in the world ; they have not only been driven out of their lives, and had their blood taken away from them ; but also in the most cruel fashion and manner that could possibly have been devised ; which shews what little esteem and account their Enemies have made of them ; *Those whom the world was not worthy of* (as the Apostle speaks of those Martyrs in the Epistle of the *Hebrews* ; and which it is thought were meant here in this Scripture which we have now in hand,) they were used and handled as the vilest Creatures in the world. And that's a second thing which shews the cheapness of the death of the Saints in such mens esteem ; their unmercifulness in the act of killing.

The third, Is their remorselessnes, when they have done it : Those which are cruel in the heat of blood, and whiles the present passion is upon them ; yet when it is over, they are many times troubled, and sorry for what has come from them : But now for these Enemies we speak of, they have no yielding nor relenting at all ; they are no more affected with it, when they have taken away the life of a Saint, then if they had cut off a Dogs neck ; yea, they are so far from being any way sorrowful, that they do many times so much the rather rejoyce ; they triumph, and boast, and glory in their cruel Practises, and the mischief which is wrought by them. These, and the like considerations, do manifest this truth unto us, how cheap the death of Gods people is in the esteem and account of God's Enemies.

Well, let it be as cheap as it will be with such graceless persons as these are ; yet we know there is One which sets a price and valuation upon it : *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints.* The Enemies they may undervalue it, and make nothing at all of it ; reckon of the killing of a Christian, no more then of the killing of a beast : But God will one day discover, that next to the shedding of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the Lord of Glory ; there was never spilt dearer blood in all the world, then the blood of his own people ; God will have a terrible account of it ere it be long how it has been shed. Those which are prodigal of blood, they may think of it
according

according as they please, call them Sheep; yea, call them Dogs, as they do, and use them like Dogs: But it will not serve their turn, *when God shall make an inquisition for blood*, Hee'l distinguish between a Dog and a Man; much more between a Dog and a Christian, and will manifest that real worth and estimation which he puts upon the lives and death of his Servants and Saints: So much for that.

For our selves; Let us learn thus much, that seeing indeed *we are accounted as sheep*, therefore to behave our selves as sheep, as the Scripture sometimes does invite us, and counsel us to be. A sheep hath many singular commendations, which we should labour to conform to in our selves.

First, It is an innocent Creature, it hath no mischievous or hurtful disposition, but is free from all wrong, and injury, and violence whatsoever: Nature has not furnished a sheep, as it hath done other Creatures besides, with any weapons, or offensiveness at all: but hath sent it into the world very peaceable, and free from annoyance. Even so should Christians be likewise in the innocency, and harmlessness of their Conversation: They should be thus like sheep.

Secondly, A sheeps a patient Creature, is dumb, and opens not its mouth before the Sheerer.

Thirdly, A profitable Creature; there's nothing about a sheep but of some use.

And lastly, It knows the voice of its Shepherd, and so should we the voice of Christ.

And thus much of the first general; the sentence it self which is alledged, *For thy sake*.

The second is the form of Allegation; *As it is written*: Where again there are two things considerable of us; First, The quotation it self. Secondly, The thing which is intended and intimated from the quotation. For the quotation it self, it is by an appeal to the Old Testament, the Book of the *Psalms*, where the Holy Ghost here by this alledging does approve and give testimony to that, as Canonical Scripture. This is the manner of Christ and his Apostles frequently to do, to strengthen, and illustrate, and confirm their Doctrine to their Hearers, by testimonies taken out of the Scriptures; It is written, and it is written, and it is written, in sundry places. To this agree the words of all the Prophets, *What says the Scripture?* and such like phrases as these, which we still meet with to the same purpose.

The reason hereof is this, to shew to us the consent and agreement betwixt the Old Testament and the New, that there is no difference or opposition betwixt them in regard of Doctrine; but what the one teaches, the other teaches likewise; that they are both of them carried and framed by the same Divine and heavenly Spirit, and accordingly to be attended by us: *We having the same spirit of Faith, according as it is written*, as the Apostle Paul speaks, in 2 Cor. 4. 13, *I have believed, and therefore speak*. The reason why the Apostle here, and else-where, and so even Christ Himself does alledge the testimony of other Scriptures, is not so much properly for confirmation, as rather indeed for illustration, and to give honour to the Old Testament, as the Word of God, which hereby is proved to be so. If we speak in regard of confirmation, neither the words of Christ, nor his Apostles needed any at all:

The

The same Spirit spake in them which did in the Prophets, and there is as full an evidence and clearness (and somewhat more) in these as in them. Therefore this was not necessary to cite them upon that consideration, but only hereby to shew their approbation of them.

This practise here of the Apostle, first of all does condemn the contrary practise of other men, especially such Ministers and Teachers as neglect to confirm their Doctrines by the testimony of the Holy Ghost in the Word. Ye shall have many which will preach an whole Sermon (if so be we may call it preaching) and not a word of Scripture in it; but I know not what rabble and farrago out of other Authors besides, which are little at all to the purpose. I do not speak against all kind of citing of other Writings in time and place, and that manner as is fitting to be; neither yet do I alwayes urge the punctual quotation of the Scripture in such and such words; but still to do it so, as that our Discourses may favour of Scripture, and our Doctrines not to be built upon our own Inventions and Fancies, but rather upon the Word of God, which is the Word of Truth. It is fit we should be taught by that Rule whereby we shall be judged, and that that should be applied unto by us.

Secondly, This serves to meet with your illuminatists and fanatical Spirits, which neglect the sure Word of Prophecie, which is laid down in the Word of God, and run only to Revelations, for a guide to them in the way which they should walk. This is contrary here to the practise of this holy Apostle, and the manner of all good Christians in all Ages: To the Law and Testimony; *Thus it is written, and thus says the Scripture is the way which we are to walk by.* The neglect of this has caused so many Errors which are abroad in the World, and Opinions which we are troubled withall; people are to seek in the Doctrine of the Scriptures, and the truths which are laid down there. And this is that which makes them to run out into so many by-paths, and conceits, and imaginations, as usually they do: If the Devil can once perswade us to throw away this Buckler, he knows he shall then be sure to have us at a very great advantage; and so he has, where he has perswaded men thereunto. This was that irresistible Weapon whereby our Saviour once conquer'd him, and he has not loved it ever since.

Therefore let us be perswaded to the exercising of our selves in this Book with all kind of diligence; to be acquainted with the Word of God, and the principal passages of it, so as it may be no strange or unheard of thing to us. Ye see here how the Apostle alledges it here in this place, *As it is written*, no more but so: He does not tell them where, nor in what place, as taking it for granted that they knew it. We should be so cunning and skill'd in the Scripture, that we should be able to know when 'tis Scripture which is alledged to us, and when 'tis not, from our acquaintance and conversation in it. I do not say that it is necessary for every one to be able to turn to every verse at the first hearing, for that's in a manner impossible; but to discern whether it be Scripture or no, at least to be acquainted with the most eminent passages of Scripture, and to have them familiar to us. For which purpose to read it, and hear it both at home, and in the publick Congregation, in our Families, and in our private Closets, to be often and frequent in
the

the study of this heavenly Book, and to spare some time from our Occasions to this purpose.

Alas! Beloved, it is that which will recompence and make amends for all, if we did but know the benefit of it, and how much good would come to us from it, we should not need to have many Arguments to provoke or perswade us hereunto: If we did but know, or at least consider, what strength it settles upon the Judgment, what command it layes upon the Conscience, what composure it gives to the Affections, what a sweet and heavenly frame and temper upon the whole Spirit, we would not be easily to seek in that which *is written*, but have the *Word of God dwell richly and plentifully in us*. And so much from what we may observe from the Quotation it self, *As it is written*.

Now secondly, For that which is intimated and signified from it; And that's this, As the consent of Scripture with Scripture; so the consent of times with times, and the conditions of the people of God in all Ages of the Church. We see here that it is no new business for God's people to be under Affliction, we have it here upon writing and Record, as that which has been long ago. This place which we have here before us, it seems to refer to the Church under *Antiochus Epiphanes*, though some would refer it rather to the seventy years of the *Babylonish Captivity*; what-ever it was, it was no other then was afterwards, and which is also to be looked for still; *1 Cor. 10. 13, There is no temptation bath taken you, but such as is common to man*. Now that which is common to one man as well as another, it is likewise common to one Age as well as another; *1 Pet. 4. 12, Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as if some strange thing happened unto you*. And *1 Pet. 5. 9, The same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren which are in the World*. This must needs be so upon these Respects and Considerations:

First, There are the same grounds of Persecution in God's people themselves. Look what were their grounds of suffering in former times, the same are their grounds of sufferings now: The exercising of their Graces, the purging out of their Corruptions, the honouring of their Profession, the increasing of their future Reward: These, they were causes then, and they are causes now.

Secondly, There's the same disposition in their Enemies, as has been in times past: Satan and wicked men, they never loved the people of God any better then now they do, *Matth. 5. 12, So they persecuted the Prophets which were before you*.

Thirdly, There's the same Wisdom and Power in God Himself: Wisdom to know how to impose them, and power, how to moderate, that they exceed not, and go beyond bounds, and their due proper limits.

This may teach us upon what terms to take up Religion and Christianity, even to do it as others have done before us; we must not expect to have it at a cheaper rate then our Brethren: If God will require so much of us for it as of them, we have no cause to murmur at it. It is an ordinary Answer in such cases, *I use you no worse then I do others*: Even so may the Lord Himself say here to us, *It has been thus with my Church in former Ages; and if you'll partake of their glory, ye must partake of*

of their sufferings. Therefore let us sit down and consider what it will cost us, as *Luke 14. 28.* Let us get our Lamps trimmed, and Oyl put into them: Grace in our Hearts, that we may be furnished and prepared, and provided against such Conditions.

Secondly; It may serve to pacify and comfort us in our Afflictions; and make us chearful under them. Every one loves company in their misery, *Solamen miseris socios*, &c. See here now what company we have in this, we have not only, as I have formerly shewen you, the example of our Master and blessed Saviour, to whom we are conformed; but likewise the pattern of our Brethren, which have gone before us in the world, and have drunk to us in this Cup of Affliction and Persecution: *I am no better then my Fathers*, sayes *Elijah*, when he was persecuted by *Jezebel*, *1 King. 19. 4.* Even so may we say here, we are not the first, nor the only Sufferers that ever were, but have many which have been Presidents to us: *Wherefore seeing we are compassed with so great a Cloud of Witnesses*, as it is, *Heb. 12. 1.* Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the Race that is set before us: *Looking unto Jesus the Author*, &c. And again, in *Heb. 6. 12.* *That ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the Promises.*

And thus now we have done with the testimony by way of illustration, and so of the first general of the Text, the triumphant question: The second is the satisfactory Answer, *Nay, in all these, &c.*

Iiii S E R M O N



SERMON XLIV.

R O M. 8. 37.

*Nay, in all these things we are more then Conquerors,
through him that loved us.*

There is nothing so importunate, nor there is nothing so confident as a Christian, and that (as one would think) in the most desperate Cases that could be; but it is still upon the safest grounds and foundations that are in the world. He is not content only to be a savor, and to keep himself free from damage, unless he be also a Conquerour and a gainer from his present condition: Nor he is not content only to be a Conquerour (which one would expect might be enough for him) unless he be also more then a Conquerour, if there be any thing more then that which belongs unto him. And this is that which we have here exhibited to us in this present Scripture which we have still before us, and with Gods assistance to be pursued by us.

The Apostle Paul had in the verses before, in the name of all other Christians, been very large in his challenging Questions and Expostulations: Who can be against us? who can accuse us? who can condemn us? who can separate us? And now he is not content to resolve it into a Negative Answer, That none at all indeed can do it. But he adds a positive determination, with some further addition to it; That they shall be so far from doing of that, as that rather do the contrary: For in all these things we are more then Conquerours, through him that loved us.

IN the Text it self there are two general Parts considerable: First, *A Christians success.* Secondly, *The account or ground of this success unto him. His success it self, that's express in these words, Nay, in all these things we are more then Conquerors.* The cause of it, that's laid down in these words, *Through him that loved us.*

We begin with the first of these parts, viz. *A Christians success*, which is here again propounded two manner of wayes: First, In its *Positive Supposition.* And secondly, In its *Comparative Amplification.* The *Positive Supposition*, That we are Conquerors. The *Comparative Amplification*, *More then Conquerors.*

First,

First, To speak of the former, and that is the *positive supposition*, *We are Conquerors*. This is the happy Privilege of all true Believers; every good Christian, he is a Victor and a Conqueror; he is one that *overcomes*, and accordingly we find him frequently to be described in Scripture: *To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life*, Rev. 2. 7: *Him that overcometh, will I make a Pillar in the Temple of my God*, Rev. 3. 12. *He that overcometh, shall inherit all things*, Rev. 21. 7, &c.

But *whom or what* is a Christian Victor or Conqueror of? we may take it in sundry particulars:

First, (Though not in that sense as it is usually taken, and as afterwards we shall consider it but in a qualified acception,) He is a Conqueror even of *God Himself*. God's people (as we may speak with reverence) they do in an holy and humble manner overcome *his Divine Majesty*; they get the better sometimes of Him. And there are two ways especially whereby they do it; The one is from the reflexion of their Graces. And the other is from the efficacy of their prayers, and wrestlings, and importunities with him.

First, From the reflexion of their Graces, and that loveliness which is put upon their purposes. This does exceedingly work upon and prevail with him, as Cant. 6. 5, *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me*: They are the words of Christ to his spouse, which is the believing soul. Thine eyes; that is, the lustre and beauty of thy Graces, with my affection to them; these have exceedingly wrought and won upon me; it is a wonderful restraint to God's hand, and which does hold him from the infliction of Judgment, the affection which he bears to his people. As Lot, whiles he was in Sodom, God profest he could do nothing against it, Gen. 19. 22. And Hos. 11. 8, *How shall I give thee up Ephraim?* &c.

Secondly, The Children of God they do conquer him by the efficacy of their prayers. Prayer, it is wonderful victorious, *Ligat omnipotentem vincit invincibilem*, as He said of it, It binds him that is Omnipotent, and it overcomes him that is invincible. We may observe it in divers instances and examples; Jacob, how did he conquer and overcome God by this; when he would not let him go, until he blest him? He is said for this reason to have prevailed with God as a Prince, and to have power over him; and accordingly had as much signified in the change and alteration of his Name from Jacob to Israel. Moses, how prevalent was he? when God was fain to bid him let him alone? so Elijah and Elisha, and others. Command me; God gives Himself up to the prayers of his people.

This victory in prevailing with God, it is the ground and foundation of all other Victories besides. They which can conquer Him, they may conquer every thing else: They which can make him their Friend, they need not care who is their Enemy; they who can prevail with Him, they may grapple with all Incounters. This is the excellency and privilege of the Faithful, the Lord does plainly yield, and submit, and give Himself up to the desires and importunities of his Servants; and so they are Conquerors of God Himself.

Secondly, They are their own Conquerors, they conquer and overcome themselves. *Fortior est qui se quam qui fortissima vincit Mania;*

He that can conquer himself, is more then he that can conquer a Castle. And he that rules once his own Spirit, is more then he that takes a City, sayes Solomon, Prov. 16. 32. Now this is the happy advantage of those who are the *Children of God*; they have a special command and victory over themselves, and their own hearts, and so thereby are the better inabled to deal with all other Oppositions. For this is a sure rule which we may observe and take notice of by the way, That he that's a slave to his *Lusts*, will be a slave to his *Enemies*. He that cannot conquer his *Affections*, will never conquer his *Afflictions*; whereas he that can do that, he will find these by little and little yielding unto him. And this now is the blessed property of God's Servants, they are great Conquerors here; Conquerors in their own hearts and private spirits; they bear a wonderful sway and stroke in these. Take a carnal and natural man, and he is a Captive to every temptation which seises upon him: He is like a Town or City without walls, which is easily taken; but a good Christian he is otherwise affected.

Therefore let us hence take a survey and an account of our selves, and see how it is with us in this regard; we are all desirous to have victory and conquest over other Enemies, let us first see how we have conquer'd our selves, and pull'd down those strong holds of sin which are in our own hearts. In *Psal. 81. 13.* we shall observe there how God speaks of his people, *Oh that my people had hearkened unto me: and Israel had walked in my ways. I should soon have subdued their Enemies, and turned mine hand against their Adversaries.* The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto them. Then may we expect that our *Adversaries* should submit to us, when we first of all submit to Christ, and his Spirit governing in us: *To him that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the Nations, and he shall rule them,* sayes Christ, in *Rev. 2. 26, 27.*

To this overcoming of our selves, we may refer as pertinent to it, the overcoming of the world, which is the priviledge also of a Believer, as the Scripture makes it, *1 Joh. 5. 5, Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* The world in all the lusts, and pleasures, and allurements of it. Thus are God's people Conquerors, so far forth as they do conquer themselves.

But thirdly, (which is most agreeable to the sense and scope of the Text, and which therefore I hasten unto) in regard of all their Enemies in any kind or condition whatsoever, which are vanquish'd and subdued by them. And these, whether they be personal or real; Personal, as Satan and evil men who are his Instruments; Or real, as all those evils and calamities which here in this life they are any way subject unto.

First, The Children of God are Conquerors over their personal Enemies; and in particular evil men, they have a great deal the better of them, and do very much prevail upon them, and that in two ways especially, which I will instance in at this present time: the one is by well-doing, and the other is by well-suffering.

First, A Christian conquers his Enemies by doing of that which is good: This is a notable conquest and victory indeed, and we shall find it called so in Scripture, *1 Pet. 2. 15, For so is the will of God, that with well-doing*

ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. So Rom. 12. 20, 21, *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head: Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* Good overcomes evil; and doing of good, it heaps coals of fire upon our Enemies head. If not coals of conversion to melt him, yet coals of confusion to astonish him, and consume him, and burn him up.

Secondly, By *suffering* of that which is evil; a Christian conquers *thus* also. Thus the Martyrs in ancient times overcame their very Tormentors, by their patience, and constancy, and resolution, and perseverance in the Faith, notwithstanding all the assaults and attempts which were made upon them: they had the better of those that opposed them, and set themselves against them. Thus they conquer'd even Satan himself, and all his Confederates, as it is express'd there unto us, in Rev. 12. 13, *They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their Testimony, whiles they loved not their lives unto death.* Thus do they conquer those Enemies which are personal, whether Satan or wicked men.

So again likewise for those Enemies which are real; that is, afflictions and evil things themselves, as those which he had mention'd in the verse immediately preceding, *Tribulation and Distress, &c.* A Christian, he is above all the evils which in this world are incident unto him; And that in three respects especially: First, By *prevention* of them. Secondly, By *cheerfulness* under them. And thirdly, By *profiting* by them. All these ways he has victory over them.

First, A Christian conquers Afflictions now and then in the prevention of them; in that they shall not seize upon him, or at least stay long with him. God's Children sometimes have so far forth an interest in Himself, as that such evils which are purposed and intended against them, shall not light upon them, but are diverted and kept off from them; and where they fall, yet suddenly removed.

Secondly, A Christian conquers his Afflictions, by cheerfulness under them; *Every mans mind is himself*, as we use to express it: He that can keep up his heart and spirit, he is so far forth a Conqueror. Then we are properly overcome, when we are dejected and cast down in our minds; when we have no life at all, as it were, left in us. As Nabal, when he had a Message of evil tydings, he was *all amort*; It is said, *That his heart died within him, and he became as a stone*, 1 Sam. 25. 37. Now a Christian, so far forth as he is a Christian, and living by the principles of Christianity, he is in some measure freed from this; *Having a spirit of God, and of glory resting upon him*, as the Apostle Peter speaks, and can rejoice and glory even in Affliction and Tribulation itself.

Take the men of the world; and they can be cheerful, it may be now and then, when they have the world before them, when they prosper and thrive in the world, and have all things that their hearts can wish. But the Children of God they are enabled in some degree to be cheerful even in sad conditions; not from a spirit of severity or stupidity, but from a spirit of faith: *He shall not be afraid of evil tydings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord, &c.* Psal. 112. 7.

This chearfulness, it is not only natural, but spiritual, and proceeding upon spiritual grounds; it is not an affection only but a Grace, and an affection renewed; not meerly from a temper of Body, but from a frame and constitution of Soul, which is a very lovely and victorious disposition. Thus it is said of *Paul and Silas*, *That they sang praises to God in the Prison*, Act. 16. 25. And the Apostles, *they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christs sake*, Acts 5. 41. This is the blessed advantage which belongs to the Servants of God, that they are not swallowed up with overmuch sorrow, as it is in 2 Cor. 4. 8, 9, *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.* A Christian is a Conqueror over his Afflictions by his contentedness and chearfulness under them; that's a second.

Thirdly, By his profiting by them; then have we the better of Afflictions, when as Afflictions have not the better of us, so as to make us worse, but rather better; when we are not prejudiced in our spiritual estate, but are careful rather to draw good and benefit out of it. And this is that which a good Christian is careful to do; in all the matter of Enemies and the Evil, which at any time comes from them, still to gain somewhat from it, for the interest and advantage of his Soul. To look upward, and to look inward; upward, to the Providence of God; and inward, into his own heart, that so he may become the better and holier from it, and improved in his inward man. *Solomon* has such a saying as this, *That when a mans wayes please the Lord, he will make his Enemies to be at peace with him*, Prov. 16. 7. Now there are two ways whereby he does it: The one is in a way of *Reconciliation*, and the other is in a way of *Improvement*: In a way of reconciliation, when he does take off their enmity from us; and in a way of improvement, whiles he does sanctifie their enmity to us, and make us to be so much the better occasionally from it. This is *salus ab inimicis*, Safety even from Enemies themselves. And by these a man has benefit by his Adversaries, whether they will or no, which is the greatest victory of all. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the success of a Christian, as it is here laid down in the first notion and proposal of it, viz. In its positive supposition; and that is, *We are Conquerors*.

The second is in its Comparative amplification, we are so, and somewhat besides; *We are Conquerors, yea, more then Conquerors*. It is a very emphatical word, and such as our English Language does not easily reach to, *Over-overcome*. Now there are two things especially wherein it may be made good unto us, that *Christians are more then Conquerors*: First, In regard of the act and victorious performance it self. And secondly, In regard of the circumstances and amplyfying appurtenances of it, that which they attain unto is in it self more then Victory; and their manner and carriage of it, does make it to be so much the more prevalent and victorious unto them.

First, As to the thing it self, Being Christians, *We are more then Conquerors here*, and that again in two particulars: First, In disabling our Enemies. And secondly, In advantaging our selves.

First, As to the *disabling* of our Enemies: A man may conquer his enemy for the present, but yet he may recruit and recover again, and fall

fall upon him with a second encounter, and be stronger then ever he was before; yea, but a Christian in the conquering of his Enemies does not only foil them, but he does for hereafter for ever disable them, at least takes off that vigor and force which was in them. All the Enemies of a Christian they shall be at last perfectly subdued unto him, and so as they shall not be able any more to rise up against him: Sin, and Sicknefs, and Death, and the Grave it self, *They shall be all swallowed up in victory*, as the Scripture assures us.

Secondly, *We are more than Conquerors*, so far forth as we hereby benefit our selves, as I in part hinted before. A man may beat his enemy, and yet himself make no advantage of it; *Satis est prestasse*, &c. But now a Christian he does this with the other; he does not only destroy his Enemy, but he does likewise divide the spoil, as I may so express it; And thus *we are more then Conquerors* as to the victorious act it self.

Now secondly, Are we so likewise as to the Manners and carriage of the victory, and that in sundry circumstances in which it may be made good unto us:

First, *We do more then conquer*, because we conquer with a little strength. There are many who sometimes make a shift to overcome and get the better of their Enemies; but they are fain to put to their whole strength and endeavour for the accomplishment of it, and it is as much as ever they can do; yea, but now the people of God they do sometimes conquer with *little advantage*; they conquer many times by *very weak and feeble means*: It's all one with God to conquer by *many* or *few*.

Secondly, They *do more then conquer*, because they conquer in a little time. There are many who sometimes *get a Victory*, but it is a great while before they obtain it. But now sometimes the Servants of God, they have the advantage of *speed* in this particular, so far forth as God is pleased at any time to be concurrent with them, and to be assistant unto them.

Thirdly, They *do more then conquer*, because they conquer with a little loss. There are many who are sometimes Conquerors at last, but it costs them full dear ere they be so; but the people of God they do so conquer, as with the least prejudice and advantage to themselves.

Fourthly, They *do more then conquer*, because they conquer where they do not fight; even the very Rest of God's people is *victorious*: *Stand still*, sayes Moses to the Israelites, *and ye shall see the Salvation of the Lord: for the Lord himself fighteth for you against the Egyptians*.

Lastly, God's Servants *do more then conquer*, because they conquer when they are conquer'd themselves. *Any one* can overcome in his Victories, but a Christian overcomes in his *miscarriages*; his very *losses* themselves are *victorious*: He overcomes even then where he is *beaten*; and goes by the *worst*: *In all these things*, sayes the Apostle. *These things?* what things are *these*? we may see them there in that verse; *Tribulation and Distress*, &c. *In all these things we are more than Conquerors*: These things, which seem to be so distant and remote, and far off from conquest, and these things which seem to be so opposite, and repugnant, and contrary to conquest; *We are Conquerors* even in such things as *these*.
The

The consideration of this Point may be thus far useful to us ; namely, as to shew us the dignity and excellency of all true Christians and Believers. The World, for the most part, looks upon God's Children as a contemptible Generation, as those who of all others are the most easily conquer'd and overcome. And therefore every one is ready to tread and trample upon them, and care not, for the most part, how they use them : Well, but they may here now take notice how it is with them ; *They are Conquerors, yea, more than Conquerors.* Yea even there sometimes where they seem most of all to do otherwise, as I signified to you before. A Christian may be conquer'd in his Person, but he is never conquer'd in his Cause ; that will alwayes hold out, and triumph over all opposition : And for his person, he is not in conclusion conquer'd or overcome in that neither, but is sure at last to go by the better. The Church of God is a prevailing and victorious Generation, and the gates of Hell shall not be able to prevail against it. What-ever is good in it self, it has a blessing in the bottom of it. Wickedness and wicked persons they stand upon a rotten foundation, and are under a Curse, which does eat and sink into them. But Religion and Christianity, it is strong and firmly founded ; and so are those likewise who are the Owners and Patrons of it. A Christian, he is one against whom there's no rising up, Prov. 30. 31.

Therefore accordingly should such persons take heart to themselves, and take notice of their great happiness in this particular. As we may observe how the Apostle here does, he speaks of it after a triumphing manner ; *We are more than Conquerors.* *More than Conquerors* ; that is, we are *Trinmphers*. St. Paul, as he was not conquer'd in his Cause, so neither was he conquer'd in his Spirit ; but herein also did hold and keep up. And so it should likewise be with all other of Gods Servants besides, they should labour all that may be to preserve themselves in a courageous frame and temper of mind. And so now I have done with the first general part of the Text, and that is a Christians success in each representation of it ; both positive and comparative, as it is exprest to us in these words ; *Nay, in all these things we are more then Conquerors, &c.*

The second is the account or ground of this success unto him, that is laid down in these words, *Through him that loved us.* Where there are two things briefly to be observed and taken notice of by us : The one is the Apostles affection, and the other is the Apostles expression. His affection is considerable in the order and method of the words ; and his expression, it is considerable in the substance of the words themselves.

First, To take notice of his affection, in his great care for the shunning of pride and ostentation, and vain-glory in himself. He had said in the words before of himself, and the rest of Believers, *That in all these things we are more than Conquerors.* This was a big and great word, and it might seem to carry a price of two much self-confidence in it, and withall to be ready to swell him and puff him up with presumption. Now therefore does he here seasonably correct it, and qualifie it, and take from it ; *Through him that loved us.* Did I indeed say, That we which are true Christians, are such glorious and triumphant Creatures in all conditions ? well, but ye must understand how I said it, and in

in what respect; even through the strength and power of Christ. And thus, I say, there is somewhat which we may learn from the Apostles affection; That God's people in their greatest *Inlargements and Apprehensions* of God's love to them in Christ, had most need to take heed of the intermixtures of pride and self-confidence in themselves. Thus does St. Paul here, and thus does he likewise in some other places; 1 Cor. 15. 10, *I laboured more abundantly than they all*; there he lifts himself up, yet not I, but the Grace of God which was with me; there he as much takes himself down. So 2 Cor. 12. 11, *In nothing am I behind the very chiefest Apostles*, there was a word of exultation; but then presently, *though I be nothing*, there was a word of dejection. So likewise Phil. 4. 13. a place much like to this at present, there he says, *He can do all things*; He can want and abound, and every thing; well, but how? *through Christ that strengthens me*: Still he is careful of this, not to give way to a spirit of presumption. This is that which it concerns all others in like manner, to be careful of, and to prevent in themselves, and that upon two grounds especially: First, Because it is an *easy* thing. And secondly, Because it is a *dangerous* thing. It is that which men do *easily* fall into, and it is that which where they do fall into it, they suffer very much from it.

First, It is a thing which is *easy*, if men do not the better look to themselves. It is that which Satan their spiritual Enemy is very forward to tempt them unto, and it is that which their own corrupt hearts do very readily close withall; as we may see in Peter for an instance, when he found himself in a cheerful frame, he was too much confident of his own strength.

But then secondly, It is again very *dangerous*, and it is that which the Children of God smart for, where they are guilty of it. *Pride and presumption in assurance* is the next way to loose assurance, when we grieve God's Spirit by presumption; Hee'l grieve our spirits by desertion and withdrawing of his Spirit from us. Therefore it was that the Lord was so careful to prevent this distemper in Paul (and it may be it still stuck with him, and now wrought upon him) that he might not be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the Revelations, there was given unto him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure, 2 Cor. 12. 7. Satan's messenger is better then Satan's sin, and a thorn in the flesh better then a thorn from the flesh: Better be under the power of an Affliction, then under the power of a Lust.

Let us therefore be careful of this in all such cases as these are: If the Lord be pleased at any time to impart himself graciously to us, and to give us any evidence of his love, or special enlargement of heart upon any occasion. Let us take heed of nourishing any motions of self-confidence in our selves, but as much as may be restrain them in our selves, as it is here in the Text. And so much for the Apostles affection.

Now in the next place we may take notice of his expression, in the substance of the words themselves; *Through him that loved us. Through him that loved us*, who is that? namely, Jesus Christ. And there are two things again which are here considerable of us: First, The Description

tion of *Christ*, and that is under the notion of him that loved us. Secondly, The cause or procurement of a Christians victory or success, and that is through the help of this Person.

First, For the Description of *Christ*; It is by this Periphrasis, of Him that loved us, as that indeed whereby he is best of all known unto us; and as if there were none that loved us (to speak of) but He alone: It is that which we frequently meet withall, as the Character which is put upon him, Gal. 2. 20, *Who loved me, and gave himself for me.* Rev. 1. 5, *Who loved us, and washed us in his blood.* Eph. 5. 25, *Christ loved his Church, and gave himself for it, &c.*

This love of *Christ* unto us, it was manifested in sundry particulars; that wherein it first shewed and discovered it self unto us, was in the business of his Incarnation, and taking of our Nature upon him. It was an high piece of love in Him, and that which was the foundation of all expressions of his love: Therefore he died for us, rose again, ascended and still intercedes at God's right hand for us; because he was first of all incarnate, and made man on our behalf: *Ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus* (sayes the Apostle) *that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich,* 2 Cor. 8. 9. Though He was rich, he became poor; that is, though he was God, he became Man. This, I say, was an high piece of favour and condescension in him, and proceeded from the riches of his love; *That being in the form of God, and thinking it no robbery to be equal with God: Yet he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of men,* Phil. 2. 6. That he should marry our Nature to his own, and take it into the union and subsistence of his own Divine Person. It was the greatest honour and favour that could be; It was the lowest abasement on his part, and it was the highest advancement on ours.

Especially if we shall farther consider upon what terms, and in what circumstances he took it; not our Nature, as it was before our fall in the state of Innocency, when it was free from all misery and affliction; but our Nature even now when it was prejudiced and disparaged by an obnoxiousness to suffering, and at the lowest ebb, our Nature together with our Condition; though not of sin, yet at least of misery: Our Hunger, and Thirst, and Nakedness, and Sickness, and Weariness; these He took upon him: *In this was manifest the love of Christ towards us,* as the Apostle John also signifies to us.

And so the Acts of his Mediatorship, which were consequent and dependant hereupon; they were the expressions of the same love: And he might well be said and described to be He that loved us in reference unto them. There's no Epithet, or Title, or Appellation which is so fit for Christ in relation to us, as this, *Of him that loved us.* And therefore it is that the Apostle does here fasten upon it, rather then upon any other besides.

There are two reasons especially (as we may very well conceive and apprehend) why he makes use of this expression in the Text, rather then of any other besides: First, Because it was the most comprehensive expression. And secondly, Because it was the most proper. First, It was most comprehensive, when he said, *He that loved us,* He said in effect every thing else. He that was born for us, that died for us, that redeemed

redeemed us, that saved us ; all's comprehended in him that loved us, because that all these things were the effects and results of his love, as from whence they did proceed.

Secondly, As it was the most *comprehensive* expression, it was also the most *proper* expression, and pertinent to the *business in hand* : For he had made mention before of Afflictions and Persecutions, and such things as those as unable to separate Believers from the love of Christ. Now because that these might seem to be most *opposite and contrary* to love of any thing else, therefore to prevent such a *mistake and misconceit* as this in us, does he set forth Christ to us from this Title of love. And that's the first thing here considerable, viz. The Description of Christ, of Him that loved us.

The second is the account, or cause, or procurement of victory to a Christian, and that is through the help of this Person thus described. All the conquest and victory which a Christian at any time has either over Sin, or else over Affliction, it is derived to him wholly from Christ ; We are more than Conquerors : But still from more then from ourselves ; From him that loved us. The Scripture is very pregnant in this Point, thus 1 Cor. 15. 57, *The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law : But thanks be to God, who hath given us the Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Rom. 7. 24, 25, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death ! I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Eph. 6. 10, *Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, &c.* And 2 Cor. 2. 14, *Now thanks be to God, who alwayes causeth us to triumph in Christ, &c.* And 2 Tim. 4. 17, *The Lord stood by me, and strengthen'd me ;* still all's ascribed to Christ.

Now there are three wayes especially whereby Christ does accomplish this victory for us, and helps us to be partakers of it ; By his Spirit, by his Example, and by his Word.

First, He enables us to conquer by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. Thus 1 Joh. 4. 4. speaking of Antichrists and seducing Spirits, *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them : because greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the world.* This greater, it is the Spirit of Christ which abides in his Children, and is a victorious Spirit.

First, We are conquer'd by Christ our selves, and then from Him we are enabled to conquer all other things : First, He overcomes us in the powerful work of Conversion ; and then we being converted to him, do in a degree partake of the same power bestowed upon us, for the conquering of all those things which are opposite and offensive to us ; our Victory is a fruit of His.

This power of overcoming, which the Spirit of Christ does communicate unto us, it is considerable in two particulars especially : First, In that his Spirit does work in us all conquering and commanding Graces, whereby we may be able to overcome. And secondly, In that the same Spirit does further *attuate* and draw out, and assist and concur with those Graces in us, whereby we do overcome indeed.

First, I say, In that the Spirit of Christ works the Graces and Abilities themselves. There are divers Graces of this nature ; as to instance in one or two of them : First, The Grace of Faith, that's a conquering Grace, 1 Joh. 5. 4, *Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world : and*

this is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our Faith. Where we have *two* things at once exhibited and represented unto us: First, The *subject* of this Conquest or Person conquering, and that is the *Regenerate*; *Whosoever is born of God.* Secondly, The *means* of this Conquest, or the *weapon*, whereby it is effected and accomplished, and that is *Faith*; *Faith overcomes the world.* This it does especially by apprehending and laying hold upon Christ, and draws strength and vertue from Him. What-ever power there is in Christ Himself, that power is interpretatively in *faith*, which does improve and make use of his Power; and that's one Grace, namely, *Faith*.

Secondly, Another Grace is *self-denial*; that's another *victorious accomplishment.* The best way for any man to get victory over his Afflictions, is by a restrained affection to his Comforts: He that sticks too close to his Contentments, will very difficultly take up his *Cross*; and when the time of trial shall come, will find it hard to *buckle with it*; But he that has his Spirit taken off from them, will so much the better grapple with the contrary. *Mortification and heavenly-mindedness*, is a great advancement of this *spiritual Victory*.

Thirdly, The Grace of *humility*: As there's nothing which is nearer ruine then Pride, so there's nothing which is nearer Victory then *Humility*. God Himself *resists the proud*, pitches battel against them; but he gives Grace to the *Humble*, and success with it.

Lastly, The Grace of *Patience*, *Vincit qui patitur*: This grapples with the greatest Evils. Thus we see the Graces themselves which God's Spirit works in order to this Victory.

Now further, he does also upon occasion actuate those Graces in us: And thus he helps us to conquer by his Power.

Secondly, As by his *Spirit*, so by his *Example*; 1 Pet. 2. 21, *Christ also hath suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.* Christ hath conquer'd afore us, that so we might the better conquer after him. He hath spoiled Principalities and Powers, and made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in his *Cross*, Col. 2. 15. And so we have the greater advantage in that particular; and therefore are required to have our eye fasten'd upon him: *Looking unto Jesus, &c. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good comfort, I have overcome the world*, sayes he, Joh. 16. 33. His Victory it makes much for ours.

Thirdly, By his *Word*: In this Christ goes forth conquering and to conquer: It is his *Chariot of triumph*, 2 Cor. 2. 14. *Ye are strong, and the word of God abides in you*, 1 Joh. 2. 14. And that in all the kinds of it, Promises, Threatnings, Precepts, &c. This was the *weapon* wherewith our Saviour Himself conquer'd and foil'd Satan: It is written, and it is written, and it is written: And so must we also our selves.

This (for the Use of it) is a ground of great comfort and encouragement to the Servants of God, that they stand not by their own strength and power, but by the power of Christ. Their conquering it is not from themselves, but rather from Him; *We are Conquerors through him that loved us.* Mark, how the Apostle sets it; He does not say *through him whom we love*; He might if he had pleased set it so, but then he should have seem'd to have attributed, and to have given somewhat herein to our

our selves, which would have very much taken off from the efficacy of the *comfort and consolation*, as if our Victory depended upon us; *Ent through him that loves us*, this gives it all to Christ.

And accordingly we see what in this case is to be done by us, where we do at any time desire Victory, even to go to Christ for it. *By his own strength shall no man prevail*, as Hannah tells us, 1 Sam. 2. 9. They that think to conquer their Enemies, whether spiritual or temporal, by this; they are exceedingly mistaken, and so in conclusion *will find*: No, but in the strength of Christ. *In hoc signe vince*, The way to obtain Victory, is to fight under His Banner, and by Faith to apply our selves to Him in the use of all *those good means* which he has sanctified and appointed to this purpose for the obtaining of it.

One thing more, and so I have done; *Through him that loved us*: These words may be taken not only *simply*, but *reflexively*, and by way of reduplication; as intimating unto us whence it is that Christ does inable us to be such *Conquerors*, and that is from his *unspeakable love*: It is from Him that *loved us*; and from Him so far forth as he loved us. Take notice of that, He hath herein and hereby manifested and made known his love unto us, in that he hath made us such *Overcomers*: *Hereby I know thou favour'st me, because mine enemies do not triumph over me*, sayes the Prophet David, in Psal. 41. 11. A Christians victory over his Enemies is a fruit of Christ's *special love*; *Others* may haply fall into the same outward trials for the condition, none can conquer and overcome in them, but from Christ's affection: *To you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in his Name, but also to suffer for his sake*, sayes the Apostle, Phil. 1. 29. Given not only as to the opportunity, but also as to the *success*.

When it is said here *from his love*: This does not exclude his power, but supposes, and it takes it in; therefore as in *this* place it is said, *Through Christ that loves us*. So again in *another* place it is said, *Through Christ that strengthens us*; because indeed they are both concomitant, and concurrent hereunto. It is from the power of Christ as *immediate*, which does manifest and discover his love; and it is from the love of Christ as *remote*, which does improve and draw out his power.

This is the very scope and drift of the Text, as we may see by reflecting upon the Coherence; *Nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ*; because his love is so prevalent for us, as to unite us, and to keep us close to Himself. This being the nature of love, as to joyn it self to other things, so to preserve them being joyned to it.

There's nothing whatsoever we enjoy, if we be true Believers, but we enjoy it as a fruit of *Christ's love*; yea, but *this* now which we speak of as a fruit of his love now *especially*, as more proper and peculiar thereunto. It is from the *love of Christ* that he *afflicts us*, and it is from the *love of Christ* also, that he *strengthens us* and *inables us* to indure Affliction. It is not from common Providence, but from special Favour: It is not from the power of Nature, but from the Priviledges and Prerogatives of Grace.

Therefore let us from hence learn to judge, and to take an account of our selves; we are apt to judge of God's love by other matters, the Corn, and the Wine, and the Oyl; yea, but try it now, and discover it by this as
to

to matter of victory, and especially over our spiritual Enemies; what strength we have to resist Temptations? what ability to subdue Lusts? what power to submit to Afflictions, or to make a *sanctified* and holy use and improvement of them? Here's the discovery of Christ's love indeed unto us.

We may improve it if we *please both ways*; both this I do in some measure and proportion overcome, therefore Christ *does love me*, and I have some hopeful evidence of *Christ's love*, therefore I shall be sure to *conquer and to overcome*.

Yea, improve it not only as to our own particulars, but also (as in every thing else) to the general good and comfort of *the Church in all Ages*.

So much for that; and so I have done also with the second general part of the Text, which is the account of a *Christians success*, and so with this whole verse; *Nay, in all these things we are more than Conquerors*, &c.

S E R M O N



S E R M O N XLV.

R O M. 8. 38.

For I am perswaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

It is a thing which is sometimes observable in the Affairs and Transactions of the world, that those who are the fullest of boasting and confidence a little at first; yet their boasting does not last long, nor has cause to do so. They triumph sometimes before Victory, and make a great deal of noise for a while, as if they would carry the world before them; but after a time, their courage is cooled, and their spirits are abated in them, and they come to be of another mind, then it was formerly with them: But in Heavenly and Spiritual matters, and as to those who are true Christians and Believers, the case is very different and contrary; For such as these, the more they boast and triumph, the more they may so, and they gain and improve both in the Grounds and occasions of Confidence, and in the spirit of Confidence it self. And this is that, which we may here observe and take notice of in the Apostle Paul out of this present Scripture, which we have still before us; He had in the fore-going Verses express'd himself with a great deal of courage, as to the state and condition of Gods People, as those whom none could accuse nor condemn, nor separate from the love of Christ; but that in all events happening unto them, were more than Conquerors. Now when we might have expected that he had done, and had no more to say in this business; yet he returns to it, and comes over it again with a fresh supply of triumphant Expressions in this close of the Chapter; For I am perswaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, &c.

IN the Text it self there are two general Parts considerable; First, *The Apostles Protestation.* Secondly, *The thing it self*, which is protested by him; His protestation, that is in these words, *I am perswaded.* The thing it self, which is protested by him, that is in these, *That neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor, &c.*

We begin with the first of these parts, viz. The form of Protestation; *I am perswaded*, where the Apostle, whiles he speaks of the state of a true Believer

Believer in reference to *Grace and Salvation* speaks of it, as a matter of certainty and full perswasion, and so the Point observable is this, that every true and good *Christian*, both *may and ought for his particular* to be confidently and assuredly perswaded of Gods love and favour to him *in Christ*, and of the constancy and unseparableness of it. This Expression here of *St. Paul*, *I am perswaded*, it is not to be taken only as limited to his *particular person*, but as extended to other Believers, as of right belonging unto them, whom the Apostle does *here represent*, as he had done before in the *former Expressions*, and it is agreeable to the language of Scripture in *other places*. Therefore we read of the *full assurance* of Faith, and of the *full assurance* of Hope, and of a *fulness of perswasion*: The word in the Greek is *πληρης*, which signifies a *full sayle*, a Metaphor taken from Ships, which having *wind and tide* along with them, are carried on without any stoppage or opposition at all: Even so is a *Christian*, when he is in the height and top of his *Comfort*, and the assurance of Gods favour to him, he goes on with a great deal of *joy and cheerfulness*, and exultation of Spirit. This is a Point which I have had occasion lately to speak to out of another Text, and so shall not now insist upon it, only briefly take notice of it, as it lyes in my way, and as preparatory to that which follows.

There are *two manner of wayes* especially, whereby we come to be assured of our salvation:

First, By the inward perswasion of the Holy Ghost in our own Consciences; which hath a threefold Efficacy with it, of a *Seal*, of an *Earnest*, and of a *Witness*, of a Seal, Eph. 1. 13. *In whom after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise*; of an *Earnest*, in the Verse immediately following, *Which is the Earnest of our Inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession*: Of a *Witness*, Rom. 8. 16, *The spirit it self beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the Children of God*.

Secondly, We come to be assured of our condition, from the Reflexion of Conscience it self, our rejoycing is this, the *Testimony of our Conscience*, &c. 2 Cor. 1. 12. And 1 Joh. 3. 21, *If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God. And the Spirit bears witness with our Spirits*, &c.

Therefore this for the use of it serves to confute the contrary opinion; and teaches us likewise to labour for this certainty and assurance our selves; seeing it is that which may be obtained, we should not rest our selves satisfied *without* it, but rather give all diligence to make our Calling and Election sure: And so I have done briefly with the *first general part* of the Text, which is the *form of the Apostle Paul's Protestation*, as it is here laid down before us in these words, *I am perswaded*.

The Second is the *matter* of it, or *thing it self protested*; and that is *much one* with that which he had before harp'd upon, *That Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ*. Now this again is here laid down in these two Verses together, two manner of wayes: First, By an *Enumeration*, or *Induction of the several particulars*: and Secondly, By a *winding-up* of all together in one general Conclusion; we shall observe the *same method in handling*, which the Apostle does here

here in *penning*, and begin first of all with the several particulars, which being sufficiently cleared unto us, we shall the better make way for the Confirmation of the general Proposition : Now they are presented to us here by pairs and links of one with another; and that in a fourfold concatenation.

First, *Neither Death nor Life*; *neither of these can separate a Believer from Gods Love in Christ*; nor diminish his Interest in him, but it shall still remain.

First, *Death* shall not do it; *Death* it makes a great separation : It separates the Soul from the Body, two friends which have been a great while joyn'd together : And it separates a man from the world, and from all the comforts and contentments in it; *Linquenda domus & tellus, & placens uxor* : From a man's Dwelling, and Possessions, and dearest and nearest Relations; it makes a very great change, as to these things here below; Oh! but for all this it does not separate a Believer from Christ. This Union it holds firm notwithstanding, and that whether we take it in regard of the Soul, or of the Body; they are both of them still united to him.

First, For the Souls of Gods Children; these are not separated from him by Death : Not separated? Nay, they are so much the more conjoynd. St. Paul desired to be dissolved; that he might be with Christ, Philip. 1. 23. And 2 Cor. 5. 6. 8. he says, *That whiles we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord*; and whiles we are absent from the Body, we are present with the Lord : so that while we are in a state of Natural Separation, we are in a state of Spiritual Conjunction. The Souls of the Righteous are in the hands of God, and they have committed their spirits unto him, as to a faithful Creator, and he faithfully keeps that which is deposited for him; our Souls are not so safe in our Bodies, as they are in the Custody of Christ : Here alas! they are subject to many vexations, and perplexities, and distractions; yea, to sins, and corruptions, and temptations; but in Heaven when they are gone from hence, they are freed, and exempt from all these, they are at rest with the Lord.

And so likewise for the Bodies of Christians, These they are not separated from Christ neither, even when they lye in the Grave, they are very accountable in the Eyes of God, and he has a special care of them, and regard unto them. The very dust of Gods people is precious, and their very bones are numbred by him. Their ashes (as I may say) sacred ashes, though not as a ground for superstition, yet as an Argument for all decent disposal of them. God does own them, and lay a special claim and title to them : Those Bodies which have been in their life time the Temples of the Holy Ghost, they are in a sort, and in a manner his Temples even still in Death, as is in part intimated to us in the 11th. Verse of this Chapter. *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus Christ from the Dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the Dead shall quicken your mortal Bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you* : Dwelleth in you, even then in a sense when your Bodies are dead; or (as some Interpreters read it) because his Spirit dwelleth in you. The Spirit of God does not let go at all his Interest in the Body of a Christian, when it is dead, and turn'd into the Grave; but has a special relation to it, which is continued

upon it. Look as whiles the Body of Christ lay in the Grave, there was no Dissolution of the *Personal Union*; so likewise whiles the Body of a Christian lyes in the Grave, there is no Dissolution of the *Mystical Union*. Thus have true Believers no separation from *the love of God in Christ*, even by Death it self.

No, nor secondly again by Life; that's another part of this link, Life it shall not prove hurtful, or prejudicial to the People of God: *Not Life?* what need he put in that? Is there any fear that that should prejudice us? Yes, in a very great measure. There are two things in Life; there's its good, and its evil; the Dark-part, and the Sun-shine: but neither of them shall prove prejudicial to those who are Members of Christ; neither the one, nor yet the other.

First, Not the Good of Life; I mean the outward Good, and comfortableness of it. There is a great deal of hazard and danger in this, as indeed there is also in every other comfort besides, if we be not aware. I'll instance in one or two of them; First, as it is an Occasion to make men to be so much the more in love with the world. The longer that men live in the world, the more, if they look not better to it, are they apt to be wedded to it, where they live at least in a jolly and prosperous condition. This is a very great Inconvenience, but Gods Children are delivered from it, as having their Affections weaned in them.

A Second Evil of Life in the prosperous part of it, is that it makes a man to defer his repentance and conversion to God. Thus it does to all carnal persons, who are as yet in an unregenerate condition; but the Children of God improve it to the working out of their Salvation, and the furthering of their future accounts.

Thirdly, Life is thus far dangerous, as it keeps a man from suffering for Christ; the more that any man has to lose, the less commonly is he willing to it; and so it is here. When a man must lose his life however, there to part with it, has not so much difficulty; but where he could keep it, and yet to lay it down, this is the tryal.

So again, as to the evils of Life; ye may take it there also, that life in this sense is not prejudicial to Gods Servants, at least in conclusion, but sanctified to them for their Advantage.

First, As it is a time of sinning, for so this present life is, and therein irksom to Gods Children. Oh wretched man that I am, &c. yea, but in Gods people it is very much qualified, forasmuch as they make it a time for the mortifying of sin in them, and getting a better stock of Grace.

Secondly, As it is a time of misery, that's a thing attendant upon life, sorrow, and sighing, and pain, and grief, &c. But Believers they get good out of it even in this consideration also.

And, Thirdly, as the time of deferring of their reward; as long as Gods Children live, they are kept out of their Inheritance, but yet it does not deprive them of their Fathers love, he has an affection for his Children upon Earth, as well as for his Children in Heaven.

Thus we see how Gods Children have an interest in life and death both, as making for their Advantage, and it does belong unto them, as it is elsewhere express'd, *Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we dye, we dye unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or dye, we are the*

the Lords, Rom. 14. 8. That's the first link which is here mention'd, *Neither death, nor life.*

The second is, *Nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers*; There is difference amongst Interpreters concerning the meaning of these words; but as I conceive, they do signifie one and the same thing under a variety of expression, and that is both the good and bad Angels, which are moreover call'd *Principalities*, from the *Dignity* of their *Nature*; and *Powers* for the greatness of their *Strength*. Now these *two* which make up this second paire, shall never separate Gods Children from his *love*.

First, Not the *good Angels*; why? whoever suspected *them*? what need was there for the Apostle to put in *that*, as if they were likely to be prejudicial to us? I answer upon a double account: First, *Improperly* and by way of supposition. Secondly, *Properly* and by way of more direct signification.

First, By way of *Supposition*; The Apostle seems to argue here, as he does also in another place, *Though we, or an Angel from heaven, &c.* Gal. 1. 8. Not as if they were likely to endeavour it, but if they should do it, it would be to no purpose, for they should never effect it.

But Secondly, take it in a more proper and direct signification, good Angels might be conceived to be three ways hurtful to Christians, and yet neither of those ways shall be so.

First Occasionally, *per modum objecti*, when men shall worship them, and give Divine honour to them, here they become a scandal and occasion of offence, but God protects his Servants from this evil: Thus Rev. 19. 10. When an Angel appeared to the Apostle John, and he fell down to worship him, sayes he, *See thou do it not, &c.* And so Chap. 22. Ver. 8, 9. There's the same *Caveat* which is given upon the same occasion.

Secondly, Good Angels might be thought to be able to separate us from Gods love preventingly, and by way of *Anticipation*, as from their interest in Gods affection, coming between us and him; as the elder Sons carrying away the love from the younger; but thus, they shall not do it: The *Elect Saints* are as dear to God, as the *Elect Angels*.

Thirdly, The good Angels may be conceived to be possibly prejudicial to the Saints and Servants of God *Ministerially*, and in reference to their Office; and that is, *per subtractionem auxilii*, by the withdrawing and denying of their help and assistance to us, or as being *Instruments* of inflicting punishment and vengeance upon us; but thus now they are not to Gods Elect, for they are still active for them to good upon all occasions, and are *Ministring Spirits sent forth for the salvation of the Elect*, Heb. 1. 14. Thus no fear of Angels in this business, that is, first of all, not of those who are good. Secondly, as not *good Angels*, so not *evil*; we must take in them also. These they are call'd *Angels, and Principalities, and Powers*, sometimes in Scripture, as well as the other; and so they are in regard of their *Nature*, even the *Devils, and unclean Spirits*, Psal. 78. 49. It is said, *that he sent evil Angels amongst them*, that is, such as were so effective, which inflicted evil plagues upon them. And so even the *good Angels* might in a sense have been said to be *evil*; or else which were so *formaliter*, in regard of those evil qualities, and dispositions, which were

inherent in them ; and so we may understand it of the *Devils*, thus *Rev. 12. 8*, It is said that *Michael* and *his Angels* fought, and the *Dragon* and *his Angels*. It is most certain that the *Devil* ; that is, the chief and principal of them, hath with the rest of them very great power for a while permitted unto him, as to the trouble and molestation of Gods Servants ; yet such as shall not any way separate as to matter of love betwixt God and them ; He being a *Spirit himself* in regard of his own nature, has from hence an advantage to joyn with our Spirit, and to apply himself secretly to them ; but still in vain as to the prejudice of the Salvation, and future Happiness of Gods Elect.

I will instance in one particular amongst the rest, which is very material, and from which we may take a scantling and account of all others besides of his *injurious attempts* and *Machinations* ; and that is his casting of evil and *troublesome fancies and conceits* into the mind, and that sometimes with that *force and violence*, as that the mind shall not be able to resist them, or keep them out. It is an evil which some of the dear Servants of God have some time complained of, whether *blasphemous* or other troublesome thoughts, and not sufficiently understanding the nature and condition of them, have been very much distracted about them, conceiving themselves from hence to be hated and forsaken of God, and to be separated as it were from his love. Therefore I shall spend a little time upon this occasion, as it falls in my way for the clearing of this point unto you, and shall shew you how little Gods Children are concern'd in it as matter of guilt unto them, or as any occasion to divide betwixt God and them, in regard of his Affection to them. These thoughts that I may speak more orderly and distinctly of them are reducible to three heads especially ; either first of all to matters of *Assent* in reference to the understanding. Or secondly, for matters of *consent* in reference to the will. Or thirdly, to matters of *Hypothesis* or supposition in reference to the fancy and imagination.

First, These troublesome and perplexing thoughts which are injected into the mind by *Satan*, they do belong to matters of *Assent* in reference to the understanding ; as when any false or erroneous proposition shall be presented to the mind, as for example, that *God is unjust*, or that *Gods Providence is asleep* in the world, or that the Scripture is corrupt, and the like : These are all *Blasphemous Assertions* in the matter and substance of them, and are so actually where they have assent unto them.

Secondly, These distracting and disquieting thoughts, are sometimes such as are matters of *consent* in reference to the will, whereas the Proposition injected, is not so much a matter of *Assertion*, but rather a matter of resolution, and so seems to carry with it the force of a *Vow or Ingagement*, as for example, thus, I will give all I have from my self and Family to such a person whom I never saw before, I will forsake the true Religion, I will disown all that are good, and the like. These are such Propositions as are very gross and notorious, and which do seem by the sound of them, to imply some obligation in them.

Thirdly, There are some other thoughts, which are (as I may say) of a mixt nature of both, and they are such thoughts as are only matters of *supposition*, and do refer to the fancy and imagination, wherein there is nothing either concluded, or yet resolved, and concluded upon, but only

only *promised* in reference to either ; as for example thus, what if the Scripture be erroneous? what if I should forsake the true Religion? what if I should do this, or that, whatever it be? These are matters neither of *absolute Assertion*, nor yet of resolution, but only of Supposition. Here's neither the understanding *assenting*, nor yet the *will* consenting; but only the *fancy framing* and devising such a conceit with it self, which hath no further efficacy with it : These are those kinds of thoughts wherewith the Devil does oftentimes disturb and perplex the minds of Christians; but that these are no way *prejudicial* to them in *matter of guilt*, or Arguments for the Questions of Gods love, or real ground of disquieting to them, will appear unto us upon these Considerations.

First, From their *manner of acting and proceeding* in the Soul it self; wherein there is neither *assent* nor *consent* given unto them, but only a bare *Apprehension* of them, as so *propounded* : Thus as to this Proposition; for instance, That the *Scripture is erroneous*. This is not *asserted*, or *believed* by the *party himself*, but only *received* into his understanding from the Devil that injects it into him. So again, for *that other*, *I will do this* or that thing *whatever it be*. It is not *consented* to, or resolved upon by the *will*, but only the *mind* apprehends the proposition under *such and such terms*, and in the *form* of a *Vow* or *resolution*, as it is presented thereunto without any *Ingagement* of the *heart*, or *affection* at all in it.

And so for those thoughts of *Supposition*, there is the like also to be said *concerning them*, which are only the Extravagancies of *Fancy* disturb'd and interrupted by *Satan*, or overclouded with *Melancholly*; but as to the *Party*, who is the *Subject* of them, have no *Moralevil*, or *Viciousness* at all in them, no more than a *squinting eye*, or a *shaking hand*, or some such outward part of the *Body*; and that upon this account, because they have not the concurrence of either *understanding* or *will* with them.

Secondly, This may also appear from the *suddenness* and *quickness* of them; for they are commonly darted and thrown into the mind, without any *Connexion* or *dependance* : whereas a man's own *proper thoughts* are with more *leisure*, and *gentleness*, and *deliberation*, and *subordination* of one thing to another.

Thirdly, From the *frequency* and *multiplicity* of them, together with their *unseasonableness*; for they may be a *thousand* times in a day, and that *impertinently* in the midst of all kind of actions, passing as *lightning* into an house from one end of it to another, and in *continual motion*.

Fourthly, From the *quality* and *condition* of them, as being contrary to the very light of Nature, and the *habitual frame* and disposition of the Soul, which of *it self* is considerable in it. Those thoughts of *Assertion*, they are contrary to the constant and habitual *Judgment* of the *understanding*; and those thoughts of *Resolution*, they are contrary to the constant and habitual byas and inclination of the *will*; and so they are not to be counted a *mans own*, but rather his that *injects* them, and imposes them upon him; like a strange Child lay'd at another man's dore, who is not the *owner* or *parent* of it.

Indeed

Indeed such thoughts as these may be said to be those mens thoughts, who are the subjects of them, *remotely, and objectively, and materially,* so far forth as their minds are for the present *employ'd about them, and conversant in them*; but they are not their thoughts *directly, and precisely, and formally*, so far forth as their minds do any way cause and exert them, or are productive of them. It is no more in this case, a man's sin, to have an *irregular thought* cast into him, than it is in another case a man's sin to have an *irregular speech* spoken before him, when a man shall hear a blasphemous speech utter'd in his presence, for him to like it, or to assent unto it, this were Blasphemy in him; as when a man shall hear such a Vow, or Promise read for him deliberately to close with it, where he *had power and liberty* to do it, this would involve him. But meerly to hear it, hath neither *blasphemy nor ingagement* at all in it; so in like manner when a man has such thoughts as these presented unto him, for him really and cordially to imbrace them, and deliberately to close with them, this would bring some guilt upon him, and make him obnoxious; but meerly to apprehend them, and to receive them, and to take them into his mind, it hath no guilt at all in it; For as an *open ear* cannot but hear the *sound* which is on the sudden made in it, to an *open mind* cannot but receive the thoughts which are on the sudden presented unto it; and Christ himself, when *Satan* tempted him, went *thus far* as to the efficacy of his Temptation. The sum of all comes to this, That forasmuch as *such thoughts* as these which we have now mention'd, are not *mens sins*; therefore they shall not henceforth be countable for them, but shall be rather set upon *Satan's score*, as proper unto him, and so shall not any way separate or divide them from the love of God; as *Joseph's Silver-cup* which was put into *Benjamin's sack*, did not take off the love or affection from *Joseph* to his brother; so neither such thoughts as these, which are but put into the minds of *Christians*, shall be able to take off the love and affection of Christ himself, who is the true *Joseph* to them. Therefore the best way to be free from them, is to neglect them, and to scorn them, and make slight of them; for the more that any trouble themselves with them, the more they will be intangled. Thus we see how *Satan* is frustrated in this his attempt of violent injection: And the same is likewise observable in all his fiery darts *whatsoever*; whether they be his Temptations *for sin*, or his Temptations *to it*; In neither shall he prevail to this purpose.

The main ground and foundation of this restrainedness of *Satan's* power, is intimated to us in the Text, and that is in reference to *Christ*; it is the love of God in Him, and therefore *Satan* cannot separate us from it; and Christ is considerable of us under a double Notion, of an *Head*, and of an *Advocate*. Of an *Head*, and so he protects his *Members*; Of an *Advocate*, and so he intercedes for his *Clients*, our security lyes, Both,

First, As we are the *Members of Christ*, and incorporate into him; He hath destroyed the Devil afore-hand, Heb. 2. 14, Forasmuch as the *Children* are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through Death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil: The seed of the Woman shall break the head of the Serpent, as it was promised at first in *Paradise*, Gen. 3. 15. And Col. 2. 15, Having spoiled Principalities and Powers, he made a shew of them openly

openly triumphing over them in his Cross. If Satan could prevail against Christ to bring him out of the love of God, he might then probably prevail against us, to bring us out of Gods love in Christ, and to expose us to eternal wrath and condemnation: But he could not do the one; and therefore he shall never be able to do the other. That's *one* Consideration.

Secondly, Take Christ as our *Advocate*; and so he intercedes for his *clients*, and we have the benefit of that Intercession, as we have formerly signified to us out of the *fore-going Verse* of this Chapter; and so we stand sure, notwithstanding *Satan*.

The Consideration of this point may be thus far useful to us; First, As matter of singular comfort and encouragement to the Children of God, *Satan* may seem for a while to prevail over them, and to have the better of them; yea, but he shall not *so alwayes*, nor he shall not *so at last*. The God of peace shall bruise *Satan* under your feet shortly; and we are strong in the Lord, even whiles we *wrestle with Principalities and Powers*.

Secondly, It teaches us also not to judge too rashly of others, who are at any time exercised with Satan, and afflicted with his disturbances and molestations of them, so as to conclude them from hence to be *Hypocrites*, or *Castaways*, or none of Gods Children; for they may be so for all that; and Gods love may be still for all that, continued unto them: And so ye have also the *second* pair or link which is here mention'd, as unable to hinder us of Gods love; Neither *Good*, nor *bad Angels*: Neither *Angels*, nor *Principalities*, nor *Powers*.

The *Third* is, *neither things present, nor things to come*. These shall not be able neither to separate us from Gods love in Christ, and we shall take notice of each of them *distinctly*.

First, Not things *present*; They shall not be able to do it; whether we take it in *good* things, or in *evil*; there's danger and inconvenience in both; yet *neither* of these shall be hurtful to the Children of God, neither the *presence* of things which are *pleasing*, nor yet the *presence* of things which are *displeasing*; and in their own nature *prejudicial*.

First, Not the *presence* of *good* things, *outward comforts*, whatsoever they be; These are such things as a *carnal heart* is oftentimes the worse for; Riches, and Honours, and Pleasures, and Friends, and the like: They are such as many times make men more vain, and proud, and presumptuous, and worldly, and earthly minded: *These things present* they engage them to this present life; make them to be mindless of *Eternity*, and forgetful of their *latter end*; but now to the Children of God, they have another and better effect and consequent attendant upon them; to these so far forth as God is pleased to bestow them upon them, they shall not be hurtful at all, but rather the *contrary*. God gives them *Riches*, and he gives them an heart to *improve* them; God gives them *Honours*, and he gives them to be humble with them; God gives them *Pleasures*, and he gives them a *sober use* of them; God gives them *Friends*, and interest, and respect, and he gives them a thankful heart with them, and wisdom still to *make use* of them to an higher purpose than *themselves*; still in their *present prosperity*, they are mindful of their *future condition*.

This is the property of Gods Children, that as *any comfort* or outward refreshment is at any time bestowed upon them; so they labour to partake of a *sanctified right*, and interest in it, and so accordingly to have a *sanctified use and improvement* of it; In which respect *things present* are in another place said to be *theirs*, 1 Cor. 3. 22, *To the pure all things are pure*; and every Creature of God is good, being received with Prayer and Thanksgiving; there's a *right* to these things which is purchas'd for us by *Christ*, and then there's a *drawing forth* of the comfort following upon this right, by Prayer; from both together, they prove not to be hurtful, but beneficial to them. These present good things.

So again secondly, for these present *evil things*, they have the same efficacy with them likewise, and they shall not finally prejudice Gods Children nor in that which is their *greatest* concernment; not present poverty, nor present bondage, nor present disgrace, &c. The bitterness of any evil or affliction, it lyes in the *presentness* of it; that which is past we forget, and when the smart is once over, we regard not. That which is to come, we are secure of, and are ready to flatter our selves, that it shall not come nigh us; it is the *present evil* which is commonly most grievous and burdensome to us, and that which does chiefly afflict us of all the rest; well, but it shall not do so to Gods Children; it shall not be over-oppressive of them, God gives them present Graces suitable to present Calamities; and as the sufferings of *Christ* abound in them, so their Consolations also aboundeth by *Christ*, as it is 2 Cor. 1. 5. The presenter that the evil is to trouble them, the presenter is the Grace to relieve them, and to assist them, and carry them through it; yea, then is the Lord himself most of all present with them, *Be not thou far from me when trouble is nigh*, says David, no more he will not, *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble*, Psal. 46. 1. And besides as God is present to support them; so he is present also to sanctifie all those evils and troubles to them, and to make them so much the better occasionally from them, and for them. Present affliction it prevents future Damnation; and we are chastened in the world, that we might not be condemned with it. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to them that fear him, even his seemingly and apparently saddest and most uncomfortable dispensations.

This is a point very satisfactory in the worst times that are, There are several periods of times in the world, and several Characters and Impressions upon them, as in regard of Sin, so also of Afflictions; as there are the present Iniquities, so there are also the present Calamities; and as there are the present Abominations, so there are likewise the present Judgments, and Plagues which are attendant upon them; but where are all these to the Children of God, who whiles they keep themselves from the former, are not consequently in danger of the latter, but may very well in an holy manner triumph over them, as St. Paul here seems to do; *Not things present, whether good or evil, shall separate us from Gods love in Christ*.

No, nor yet secondly, *Things to come*, *et in re pendentia*. These shall not do it neither. *Things to come*, they are such things as are hid from mens discerning and apprehension, and they know not what to make of them; yea, but thus far they are certain and infallible, as they shall make for the

the good of Gods people; and therefore in the place before cited; 1 Cor. 3. 22. as things *present* are made a part of their portion, and said to be *theirs*; so are *things to come* likewise. And so indeed upon the point, *all things* in the full *latitude* and extent of being.

This is a point *very sweet and comfortable* in the Meditation of it, and comfortable also to *our selves*, as many of us as are *Members of Christ*, and belong to him: We are now through the goodness of God entred upon a *New-year*, and what *this year* may produce, there's none of us know, what *things are to come* in it, we cannot *foretell*; there are divers jealousies, and sad apprehensions concerning it: we look up unto the *Heavens* and seek for discoveries there, and truly we have no cause to despise or to condemn such instructions as *these*; because God does usually *speak somewhat*, and that more than ordinary, by such things as those are; but yet withall let me tell you thus much, that those who have *Moses and the Prophets*, and will not *hear them*, there is little hope that a Messenger either from Heaven, or Hell it self should do any great good upon them, as our Saviour aforehand has advised us.

Well, but let it be what it will be; here's that which is for the comfort of Gods Servants, that things to come even under the greatest uncertainty, shall never be able to separate them from *Gods love* in Christ: come what can come, come what may come, come what will come, yet we know that nothing shall come amiss to such as these, whatsoever it may prove; but all things shall work together to their greatest and chiefest good. Gods Children they have an interest in their God, who is the *Lord of time*; who orders and disposes of the seasons, as himself pleases; and their times in all the varieties and circumstances of them are *in his hand*, and so they have no cause to be *anxious* or *sollicitous about them*, but to be very well perswaded of them; though they cannot foresee particular events, yet they know that for the general all shall tend to that which is best, and is most desirable for them.

If we speak of *things to come*, but as to *this life*, and as taken under the notion of *uncertainty*, Gods Children are not at a *loss here*, but upon *very good terms*; but then if we speak of *things to come* as to the *life following*, and as under the notion of *certainty*, here they are *infinitely and transcendently glorious*. *Things to come*, these are the *greatest interest* and concernment of *Believers*, and such as above all *others* they do most reckon, and depend upon. If our hope were only in *this present life*, we were of all men most miserable; but now there are *better things* hereafter which God has provided for those that fear him: *We have here no abiding City, but we seek that which is to come. Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

It is the great disadvantage and prejudices of men of the world that their happiness it is confined to *things present*; they have their reward, and they have received their consolation, and they have their portion only here below in the world; thus the Scripture still speaks of them, *Thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, &c.* as was said to *Dives in hell*: whereas on the other side, the happiness of Gods Children lyes in *future expectations*. Worldly men, they do every day (as I may say) spend upon their stock, and eat out that comfort and happiness which

does belong unto them. Every day that they live, as it takes somewhat from their happiness, which therewith is diminished unto them; but now with the Children of God, it is far otherwise and contrary. This is the comfort of a good Christian, that the further he goes in *Being*, the further still he goes in *happiness*, and his best is still *to come*; the longer he lives, and the older he grows, and the nearer he comes to his grave, so much the nearer he comes to his *Haven*, and the place of his Eternal rest: *He may lift up his head, because his Redemption draweth nigh: Things to come which are evil, shall not prejudice him, but things to come which are good shall advance him, and be sure to make for him.*

Christ himself, he is *Alpha and Omega*, as he is described to us in the *Revelations*; he that *was*, and that *is*, and that *is to come*. And accordingly those who are his *Members*, and that do indeed belong unto him, they have an interest in all *these distributions and extents of Time*. And in the *last* of them amongst the rest, after a more especial manner.

That's the *Third Pair or Couple*, which is here mention'd; *Neither things present, nor things to come*. And so we have done with the 38th Verse of this Chapter: Now it follows afterwards in the next Verse, *Neither height, nor depth, nor any other Creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*. But of this, God willing, we shall speak upon the next occasion.

S E R M O N



SERMON XLVI.

R O M. 8. 39.

Nor beight, nor depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We are now at last in the close of this secret and comfortable Scripture, which hath hitherto been handled by us. Where there are two things especially as we may observe that run through the veins and genius of it : The one is the state of a Christian, and the other is the spirit of a Christian. The state of a Christian, as that which is firm and immoveable : And the spirit of a Christian, as that which is triumphant and victorious. Each of these are here remarkable in the carriage of the Apostles present Discourse ; and especially in these two last verses which I have now read unto you, wherein (as you may remember) I took notice of two general Parts : First, The form of the Apostles protestation ; I am perswaded. Secondly, The thing it self protested by him ; That neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, &c. In which latter we again observ'd two things more : First, The Induction or Enumeration of particulars. Secondly, The general Doctrine or Proposition arising out of them. The Induction of particulars, that consists of several pairs and couples which are linked together. Three of which we have already dispatch'd, Neither Death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor things present or to come.

THe fourth pair or couple in this link, is *height and depth* ; these likewise are unable to separate God's Children from his love : And these may be conceived of according to a various explanation.

First, Neither the height of wordly *Advancement*, nor the depth of worldly *Abasement*. *Advancement* and *Abasement*, they are such things as many people in the world do very much stumble at, and are now and then much prejudiced by them ; but God does graciously preserve his Servants from the inconveniences and prejudices of them ; especially as may be any way obstructive to the love of Christ towards them.

First, *Honour and Advancement*, dignity and height of place or preferment, that shall not do it. It is that which it sometimes does to some

M m m m 2

kind

kind of persons, when they are not more watchful of themselves: *High-standing* it is apt to make men *giddy*, especially when they shall look down upon others which are far *inferiour* to them. And there are great Temptations which are now and then attending thereupon, of pride, and scornfulness, and security, and self-confidence, and the like. But now the Children of God are through his Grace preserved from them, especially where their height proceeds from his Favour and special Providence towards them, as sometimes it does: *I will set him on high, because he hath known my Name*, Psal. 91. 14. Where height is of Gods bestowing, it is of Gods blessing, for the ordering and managing of it. And God gives a man an heart answerable and futable to it, to enjoy his height of Place with *lowliness* and *humbleness* of mind; for so it is possible to be where God will vouchsafe it. As a man may have an *high spirit* in a *low condition*, so he may have an *humble spirit* in an *high condition*; yea, according as his Place may require it, and the circumstances in which he may be; He may have both *greatness* of spirit and *littleness* of spirit likewise at one and the same time; *Meekness* without *weakness*, Christian *magnanimity* and Christian *humility* both together: A Child of God he shall not be afraid of that which is *High*, as we find the phrase used in another sense, and upon another occasion, in Eccles. 12. 5.

And so for *abasement* and *lowness* of condition; he does not suffer from that neither, as St. Paul says of himself in another place: *He knows how to excel, and he knows to be abased; to be full, and to be hungry; to abound, and to suffer need.* There's a depth of *Affliction* as well as an *height* of *Prosperity*. We read of the *Macedonians* deep poverty, 2 Cor. 8. 2. which is that which many good Christians do sometimes fall into; but yet God supports them, and carries them through it. And so for all other kinds and conditions of abasements of *Reproach* and *Contempt*, and *Ignominy*, which is cast upon them; these things they are digested by them: He that's low in his *own eyes*, he can be content to be low in *another's*; and not quarrel with the Providence of God in suffering him to be so; nor yet envy or repine at *others* who are in an higher condition than himself, which are commonly the temptations and infirmities of such persons as are in a *lower rank*. And besides, God Himself does *own him*, even whiles 'tis thus with him; *Who remembered us in our low estate, for his mercy endureth for ever*, as the Church speaking of her self, Psal. 136. 23. Yea, and accordingly *prays* for her self in the like condition; Psal. 79. 8, *Let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us, for we are brought very low.* That's one explication of this height and depth; Neither the height of worldly *Advancement*, nor the depth of worldly *Abasement* shall be prejudicial to the good of Gods Children.

Secondly, Not the height of *spiritual* *Inlargement*, nor the depth of *spiritual* *Desertions*. *Spiritual* *Inlargement*, it is an *height*, and a very great one: A Christian who walks in the evidence and assurance of God's love in Christ, and has more especial communion with him; he is lifted up even into Heaven it self, and is advanced above the ordinary rank of men in the world; yea, but this, as God does order it to him, shall not too much exalt him. God can keep his Servants in a comfortable frame and in an humble frame both at once; nay, none indeed are *more humble*, then those for the most part who are most *comfortable*:
Neither

Neither is the *Doctrine of Assurance* a *Doctrine of Pride*; neither is the *state of Assurance* a *state of Pride*. The more that any man is well persuaded of *Gods love*, the more is he also persuaded of *his own unworthiness*. As *Peter*, when he was overcome with the special sense; and extraordinary experience of *Christ's love and beauty* towards him; he breaks forth into that expression; *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man; O Lord*: Not as one that was weary of *Christs presence*, but rather as one that was sensible of his own ill deservings.

So again, as to *spiritual Desertions*; the *depth* of that shall not hinder neither. This in Scripture is sometimes call'd a *depth*, as in *Psal. 130. 1*; *Out of the depths have I cryed unto thee*; and in some other places besides. God sometimes brings his Children into these depths, whiles he withdraws from them the sense of his love, and comfortable presence; well, but even then does he yet still retain his affection to them, and does after a secret manner *support them*; God will take care that they shall not be *swallowed up with overmuch sorrow*. And though they fall into a *depth of sadness*, yet they shall not fall into a *depth of despair*: *There's an height and depth in Gods love* which is above the *height and depth* of our Infirmities, or the sense and apprehension of them, which is here very considerable.

Thirdly, Take this *height and depth* here spoken of, as to the *Mysteries*, whether of Faith or Providence, and ye shall find that neither these shall prove any disparagement to God's Servants; neither the *height of Election*, nor the *depth of Reprobation*. The rejecting of the *Jews* on one hand, and the calling of the *Gentiles* on another. The prosperous condition of the Wicked, and the afflicted condition of the *Righteous*: Neither the depths of *Satan*, nor yet the deep things of God, neither of these in conclusion shall stumble or scandalize a true Christian.

Lastly, Neither *height nor depth*; that is, neither things above, nor things below. It is a large and *comprehensive* expression, which the Scripture uses in such like cases, when it will *take in all*, and so speak of *any thing*, as to leave *nothing out*. Thus in the *Second Commandment*; *Thou shalt not make to thee the likeness of any thing that is in the Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, or in the waters under the Earth*. So *Phil. 2. 10*. speaking of the honour which is due to Christ, the Apostle uses the like *general expression* of things in *Heaven*, and things in *Earth*, and things *under the Earth*. And the Prophet *David* intending to set forth the *Glory of God*, he calls upon the *heights and depths* to praise the Lord, that so nothing might be wanting thereunto. So the Apostle intending here to shew the safety and security of God's Children, sayes, *That neither height, nor depth shall separate them from the love of God in Christ*: This is the force of this expression.

Yet if we will take it more *restrainedly* and particularly, we may take it *thus*; Neither the influences of *Heaven*, nor the contingencies whether of *Land or Sea*.

First, Take it as to the influences of *Heaven*: These are such as many people especially now at this time have a great regard unto, and that a great deal more then to other things which are more to be regarded: But those which are the Servants of God are above all these heights.

Sapiens

sapiens dominabitur astris, A wise man he has the advantage of these Cœlestial Prognostications: and *he is wise indeed*, that is *wise to salvation*. Our *blazing wickedness* is worse then our *blazing star*, and carries a greater emphasis of threatening and commination with it, which those who are careful to keep and free themselves from, may have peace in all other *presages*. Those who are the Children of God, and careful to walk in his fear, they shall not need to be *dismayed at the signs of Heaven*, Jer. 10. 2.

So neither again at the contingences of *Earth*, whether the *Sea* or *dry Land*; which may be referred to the *depth*, as the former makes up the *height*: First, Take it as to the *Sea*, which is emphatically call'd the *deep*; This shall be no *prejudice to Gods Children*, St. Paul gives us an account of himself, *That he had been in perils by waters in the Sea, that he had thrice suffered shipwrack, and a night and a day he had been in the deep*. And yet we see how he got well out of it, and was delivered from those *eminent dangers*. The Prophet *Jonas* relates it of himself, *That the Waters compass'd him, that the Depth clos'd him round about, and that the Weeds were wrapt about his head*, Jonah 2. 5, 6. And yet the Lord rescued him out of it, and brought up his life from *Corruption*. The Apostle *Peter*, he walk'd upon the *Sea*, and it did not swallow him up: And the rest of the Disciples they were preserv'd and kept safe in the *Tempest*. And so many others besides, at least they have been kept from the *mischievousness* of such occurrences, and have had them ordered and sanctified to their good, because they have had an interest in Him whom the *Winds and Seas* obey. This is a great satisfaction to all the Servants of God, which are concern'd at any time in such affairs as those are. Those that go down to the *Sea* in ships, and do business in great waters, they see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the *Deep*, sayes the Psalmist: For he commands, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifeth up the waves thereof. They mount up to Heaven, they go down to the *Depths*, their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he brings them out of their distress, &c. Psal. 107. 23. Here's both of these particulars in the Text: They mount up to Heaven, there's height: They go down again into the *Sea*, there's depth, and yet at last recover of each.

And so likewise we may take it as to the *Earth* and the *Depths* thereof: How many dangers are we here incident to, and yet graciously preserved from them? when we are ready to be swallowed up by them. It is that which we may frequently take notice of in sundry instances: Thus neither height nor depth.

It follows as a close of all; Nor any other Creature; that is, any Creature which is already, or if hereafter there should be any other made, there would be no fear of it. It's an, &c. to make up the sentence, and to supply what our fancies in this case might frame to themselves.

Now whiles the Apostle is thus curious in this exact enumeration of particulars, and such as are so full and comprehensive. There are two things which we may gather from it: First, The weakness of our Faith, especially in Times of temptation, which the Spirit of God is fain to provide for, by such a compleat dealing with us. The multiplying of
many

many words is only to keep out evasions, and shifts, and pretences which *Satan* and our own hearts together, are ready to make against us. As you know it is in the *Law*, in the drawing up of a *Bond* or *Indenture*, there are many several words and terms used of one and the same importance; where it might be thought that one only would serve the turn, only to prevent the *falseness* and perverseness which is in *mens minds*; even so is it also here in this place: *Neither Death, nor Life, nor things present, nor things to come, &c.* It shews the doubting of our distrustful hearts, and the hardness and difficulty of believing.

Secondly, (which is indeed the main scope and drift of the Text) It shews the *certainty of our own salvation*. Seeing none of these things fore-mentioned are able to hinder us; we may from hence take notice of the *sureness* of the thing it self against *all opposition*. And so now I have done with the first branch of the Apostles Perswasion, as it consists of the enumeration of particulars; *Neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, &c.*

The second is, The *general conclusion* or main Doctrine it self, and that is, *That nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus*. Wherein again we have two branches more: First, The firmness or immoveableness of God's affection. And secondly, The ground or conveyance of it. The *firmness* of God's affection, that is exprest to us in these words, *That nothing shall separate us from his love*. The ground or conveyance of this affection, that is exprest in these words, *Which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*.

We begin first of all with the *former, viz.* The firmness or immoveableness of this affection which God bears unto his people, which is declared in these words, *That nothing whatsoever shall be able to separate us from it*. We have had almost the same expressions, as ye may remember in the foregoing verse, the 35th verse of this Chapter. But I shall not handle the same Point out of *this* as I did out of *that*, but another which is different from it; and that is *this*, *That the spiritual estate of Gods Children is a firm and immoveable condition*. This is the conclusion which does naturally arise from these words, where, as I conceive, the *love of God* is not only to be taken for his *affection*, purely and barely consider'd, but as well and moreover for the *expression* of it in its *effects*; *Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God*; that is, nothing shall be able to take us off from that blessed and heavenly condition, wherein God's love is in so special manner discover'd and exprest unto us. And so it does point out unto us the *perseverance* of the Saints in *Grace*, and their certainty of future Glory. There's the certainty of the Subject in these words, *I am perswaded*; which we have already handled. And there's the certainty of the Object, in these words, *Nothing shall be able, &c.* which is now to be handled by us.

This is agreeable to the whole current of *Scripture*: Thus *Psal. 125. 1*, *They that trust in the Lord shall be like mount Sion, which cannot be moved, but abideth for ever*. *Heb. 12. 28*, *Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom that cannot be moved, let us have Grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, &c.* This Kingdom it is begun in *this* world, and it is perfected in *another*; And as we cannot be turn'd out of Heaven, when once we come *thither*; so we cannot be kept from
Heaven

Heaven neither, when we are once in the right way to it, but shall most assuredly *come thercunto*. It is a Kingdom which cannot be moved, nor those who are Inheriters of it *removed neither*. Therefore a true *Christian*, he is compared to an house, *that is built upon a Rock*, &c. *Matth. 7. 24.*

Now the firmness and stability of Gods People, in regard of their spiritual Estate, may be thus surrender'd:

First, From the *Promise of God*; it is a part of his *Gracious Covenant* with them, not only to put his fear into their hearts; but withall, so to put it, as that it shall not depart from them. Thus in *Jer. 32. 40.* *I will make an Everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; and I will put my fear into their hearts, that they shall not depart from me*: where we may take notice of two Expressions, and both of them very comfortable to us in this particular: First, Gods Promise for *his* part, that he will not turn from us; and secondly, Gods Promise for *our* part, that we shall not depart from him: And the latter issuing from the former, Therefore we shall not depart from him, because he will not turn from us: And in both these regards is his Covenant an everlasting Covenant. So again, *Esay 54. 10.* *The Mountains shall depart, and the Hills shall be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee; neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed*, &c. *Mark. The Mountains shall depart*, &c. In the place before cited out of the *Psalms*, it was said of those that trust in God, that they should be like Mount Sion, which could not be moved, &c. yea, but here now he goes a little further, and sayes more than so, The Mountains they may haply depart, and the hills they may chance to be removed; yea, but the love and kindness of God towards his people, it is such as shall not be taken away from them.

Secondly, The strength and Power of *Christ*, that does likewise lay a ground for this Truth; there's his Ability joyn'd to Gods faithfulness, and the Power of God joyn'd to the Truth of God; Thus *Heb. 7. 25.* it is said, that he is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him. And we are kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation, *1 Pet. 1. 5.* In *2 Tim. 1. 12.* *I know whom I have trusted, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* And *Joh. 17. 12.* *Christ* speaks it in his own person, *Whiles I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy Name; Those whom thou gavest me have I kept, and none of them is lost.* And *Joh. 10. 28, 29.* *I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which hath given them me, is greater than all, neither shall any man pluck them out of my Fathers hands*: what with the hands of *Christ* himself, and what with his Fathers, the Elect are surely kept, that none can hurt them. That's the Second.

Thirdly, It may be further evinced from the Nature of saving Grace it self, and the work of Regeneration, which is a constant and abiding principle, and so is signified to us to be in *1 Joh. 3. 9.* *Whoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin*, namely, as to final Apostacy, because he is born of God. What's this same seed of God? It is habitual Sanctification, and the life of Grace, which by the Spirit of God is infused into the heart. This, it abides and remains;

remains; and so therefore he which has it, he *does abide*, and remain likewise. Grace it is not a business of *Art*, a thing meerly taken up, but (as we may say) a *second Nature*, which is firmly and deeply rooted, and fasten'd in the *Soul*, which is that which makes the difference betwixt a *true Christian*, and an *Hypocrite*. The *stony ground in the Gospel*, it fell away, because it *wanted rooting*; and so it is with many a carnal person, they want a principle of saving grace in them, and therefore they fall back, whereas a true Christian is compared to an *Oak*, whose substance is in him when he casts his leaves, *Esay 6. 13*. He has in him a *Spiritual life*, which the Scripture is pleas'd to call the *life of God*, and the *life of Christ*, in *Eph. 4. 18*. And in *Gal. 2. ver. 20*. Now this *life of Christ*, it is such as is not subject to *Death* any more, *Rom. 6. 5*. If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him, *Knowing that Christ being raised from the Dead, dyeth no more; Death hath no more dominion over him*. Look as Christ being raised from the Dead, that is from the natural death of the Body, he does no more enter again into that dead condition; even so likewise a Christian by the power of the same Spirit, being raised from the *Death of sin*, shall no more return to his *Condition of natural Corruption*, so as to abide under the power of it, being spiritually alive, he shall henceforth in a spiritual sense *dye no more*.

Take any thing else in the world, besides *true Grace* indeed, and ye shall find an uncertainty in it; let it be *Education*, or *Custom*, or *Natural Conscience*, or the *Credit of Religion*; none of these things are sure to hold or to continue long: but now for the *power of Godliness*, and a *true gracious heart in good earnest*, it is such as is *lasting and remaining*.

Fourthly, A Christians *unmoveableness* is confirm'd from the *Intercession of Christ*. Whatever it is, that *Christ asks* in the behalf of Believers, it is most *undoubtedly* granted unto them. Now this is that which he does perform in reference to the *stability of his Members*, as we may see in his last Prayer which he made for them here in the world, and when he was going out of it, *Joh. 17. 11*, *Holy Father, keep through thine own Name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be with me where I am*: So in *ver. 15*, *I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil*. And that we might not think that this Prayer reach'd only to the Apostles, and present Disciples, he explains himself further to us in the 20th. Verse following; *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, &c.* This is so strong an Argument which is taken from Christ's Intercession, as that it is still made a principal ground of our *Perseverance and final Salvation*; as in the place before alledged, *Heb. 7. 25*, *Therefore he is able to save to the uttermost, or for evermore, them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them*. And so even here in this very Chapter as I have formerly shewn unto you, it is made by the Apostle a ground for our *freedom from Condemnation*; because he *intercedes for us at the right hand of God*.

Fifthly, From the Nature of *Election*, which is a firm, and unchangeable Decree; thus in Verse 33. of this present Chapter, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect?* Those who are Gods *Elect*, they shall be kept from falling from God. The *Election* hath obtain'd it, though the rest are *harden'd*; The foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this

seal; *The Lord knoweth them that are his*: Therefore the Apostle glories in the *Thessalonians*, in reference to their Election; *Knowing brethren beloved, your Election of God, and we are bound to give thanks to God for you, because he hath chosen you to Salvation, &c.* Those whom God hath chosen to Salvation, he will at last bring to Salvation; *God hath not cast away his people, whom he fore-knew*, Rom. 11. ver. 2.

Sixthly, The People of God cannot possibly fall away from him, nor be separated from his love in Christ; because they are sealed by the Spirit of God unto the day of Redemption. This Seal it is not only the work of Faith it self, but somewhat else which is additional to it, and supervenient upon it; namely, a further settling, and strengthening, and confirmation of us in it: According to that in Eph. 1. 13, *After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise*; where it is intimated and signified to us, that when the Spirit hath wrought Faith in the Heart, he afterwards comes and confirms his own work in us. *He which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts*, 2 Cor. 1. 22. There are two things which Gods Spirit does in point of sealing: First, He does ratify, and stablish, and confirm our salvation it self; and secondly, he does also certify it, and assure it, and confirm it to us. And so the standing of a Christian is every way firm and unmoveable, and there's nothing shall ever be able to remove him from it.

Lastly, The condition of Gods Children in spirituals, is a most certain condition, because God himself will not alter it; and because the Creature it self cannot alter it, God himself will not do it, because he is unchangeable, and the Creature cannot do it, because it is infirm; neither things in Heaven, nor things in Earth, nor things under the Earth, neither things which already are, nor things which hereafter shall be; and so indeed in Conclusion nothing at all. In all these respects is our salvation made good unto us, from the Promise of God, from the Power of Christ, from the Nature of Grace, from the Intercession of Christ, from the Election of God, and from the Seal of the Spirit, from Gods unchangeableness, and the Inability of any Creature whatsoever, as to the hindering, or intercepting of it,

This as it serves to nullify and make void the contrary opinion; so it serves very much to comfort and incourage the Servants of God: Every condition that is good, it is so much the better as it is immoveable, and incapable of alteration: And thus is it with the state of Gods Children, both as to their present Grace in this life, as likewise as to their future happiness and salvation in the life to come. And so much may suffice to have spoken of the first Particular in this second general, which is [the firmness, or immoveableness of Gods Affection consider'd in it self, That nothing is able to separate true Christians and Believers from his love.

The Second is the Ground or Conveyance of this Affection; and that is express'd in these words, *which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*. The love of God to all Believers, it is laid and founded in Christ; this is the Point which is here exhibited unto us; this is that which the Scripture does abundantly declare unto us, Eph. 1. 6. *He hath made us accepted in the Beloved*: In the Beloved, that is in Christ, who is therefore call'd the Son of his love, Col. 1. 13. So Matth. 3. 17, *This is my beloved Son in whom*

whom I am well pleased : Not only with him, but in him ; with him for himself, and in him, with all others whomsoever he is pleased withall, In 2 Cor. 5. 19, God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them ; all is still referred to Christ.

Now there are two manner of wayes especially, wherein Christ is the conveyance of his Fathers love unto Believers ; First, By vertue of his Relation and nearness to us. And Secondly, By vertue of his Activity and stirring for us ; both *Subjective* and *Meritorie*.

First, He is the conveyance of his Fathers love unto us, by vertue of that near Union and Relation which we have to him ; Forasmuch as we are very Members incorporate into him, and made one with him. Christ and a Believer they are Mystically and Spiritually one ; and do both of them come under one and the same particular Consideration ; therefore by the same reason, as God the Father loves Christ, he must also love those who are so far forth Members of Christ. This is the general voice and strain of the whole Scripture ; as Job. 17. 23. The words of Christ himself in his Prayer to his Father, That the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. And again, in Verse 26. of the same Chapter, I have declared thy Name unto them, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them : Mark here, Gods love to Believers, is made to be of the same nature and kind with his love to Christ. First, God looks upon Christ, and loves him ; and then in him, he loves all those who are (as we may say) parts of him, and have reference and relation to him ; as he that loves the Head, and desires the welfare of that, does consequently desire the welfare of the whole Body together with it, that does belong unto it.

Secondly, Christ is also the conveyance of the Fathers love to us meritoriously, and by way of procurement ; Christ has obtained of God the Father to love us, together with himself. This he hath done by the Oblation, and once offering up of himself upon the Cross for us ; he hath hereby taken away all the Enmity betwixt God and us, and hath perfectly reconciled us to him ; this was the main and principal end for which at first he came into the world, and continued so long time in it, and at last departed out of it, that he might procure us his Fathers love, and that we, who were sometimes Enemies might be reconciled.

The Use of this Point to our selves, is, First of all, that which is the main scope of the Text, and so upon that account the best Improvement of the Doctrine which is raised out of it ; namely, to declare unto us the unseparableness of Gods love to a Christian ; therefore it is that nothing shall be able to separate us from Gods love ; because indeed this love of God, it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The love of God towards us, it may be conceived to be an immoveable love upon a twofold Consideration ; First, In regard of the Subject, as it is the love of God himself, who is of an unchangeable Nature ; and of this we have spoken formerly. Secondly, in regard of the Object, or the Ground and conveyance of it to us, as it is first of all pitch'd upon Christ, and from him derived to us, who have an Interest in it for his sake.

What love in all the world is so strong and likely to hold, as that which is founded in Nature ? The Love and Affection which a Father bears

to his Son, and to the fruit of his own Bowels; certainly this is a love which is unalterable and uncapable of change: why this now is the love which God bears to all true Believers; it is such as is founded in *Christ*, and so hath the strength of a natural love and affection in it, as a Prince that loves any man out of the respect which he bears to his own Son, it must needs be as firm a love as that love which he bears to his Son.

Secondly, We see here what cause we have to labour to be *set into Christ*, and to become *Members of him*; it is that which is as necessary for us, as it is for us to be partakers of *Gods love*, which is conveyed unto us no other wayes than only through *Christ*; those who are out of *Christ*, they are out of the love and favour of God, as being founded only in him. There's somewhat like love, which God may shew now and then to carnal and unregenerate persons, as whiles he casts upon them a great abundance of these outward and worldly contentments: But alas, if there be nothing else with it, it is far enough from true Affection; because it is not done with respect to the party himself, whom it is bestowed upon: But Gods love to us in *Christ*, it does season, and sanctifie, and sweeten all these comforts unto us; and this is vouchsafed to none but to those who are by Faith *set into him*, and who would not then labour and indeavour after such a condition as this? There's none, if we should ask them, but would all desire to be beloved of God; As they would be so in good earnest, let them labour to be *Members of Christ*.

Thirdly, seeing the love of God to Believers is laid and founded in *Christ*; we see then what cause we have to be thankful for *Christ*, and to acknowledge him in all the expressions and discoveries of Gods love unto us. Thus the Scripture teaches us to do upon all occasions; as in *Eph. 1. 3*, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath bless'd us with all spiritual Blessings, in heavenly places in Christ*: So in *2 Pet. 1. 3. 4*, we are said through the knowledge of *Christ* to partake of all things that pertain to life, and Godliness, as a ground for the praising of him. Take God as the God of Nature, as he is the Creator and Governor of the world, and so bestowing outward Blessings upon us, and we have cause to bless him, and praise him so: But the main and chiefest of all, as he is a gracious Father in *Christ*, and in Covenant with us through him, which is the ground and conveyance of the greatest mercies and favours that are.

Lastly, Here's that which may shew us the vanity and fondness of the Papists who teach Doctrines destructive of this Truth; and that in two particulars,

First, Whiles they teach us to run to the Mediation of Saints and Angels, and to derive Gods love from them; what is this but to forsake the Fountain, and to seek to broken Pitchers? Alas, Gods love to us, it is not laid in any of them, but only in his Son *Jesus Christ*; and therefore what should we decline him, and betake our selves to them?

So again secondly, Who would make Gods love to us to be founded in our selves, and our own inherent Righteousness, and the like. It is true that God takes a special complacency and delight in those sanctifying Graces which at any time he beholds in us; but these still as they are the Graces which we do receive from the Spirit of his Son: And his love

to our persons, it is founded in his love to his Son; as I formerly declared.

There is but one word more in the Text, which I will only name, and so conclude, and that is the Relation wherein Christ is here presented unto us; and that is of *our Lord*. This is that which he is frequently call'd in Scripture. *Act. 2. 36.* it is said that *God hath made him both Lord and Christ*; So *1 Cor. 8. 5, 6,* *Though there be Gods many, and Lords many; yet to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him, &c.* So *Act. 10. 36,* *Jesus Christ, He is Lord of all.* Christ is *our Lord* in three respects especially,

First, By *Creation*, as he hath made us. *Col. 1. 16,* By him were all things made, in *Heaven and Earth*, whether visible, or invisible, &c.

Secondly, By *Redemption*, as he has purchased us, we are his *so*. The Lord that bought them. And we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, &c. *1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.*

Thirdly, By *Conquest*; as he has rule and dominion in us by the Scepter of his Word and Spirit.

This, it teaches us accordingly to carry and demean our selves towards him, by fearing him, and yielding all Duty and Obedience to him; *If I be a Master or Lord, where is my fear, Mal. 1. 6.*

By imitating and conforming to him: *As I your Lord and Master have done, so also do ye.*

By *Patience* in suffering with him: *The Servant is not above his Lord.*

And by letting him every way to prevail, and to bear sway in us. *Jesus and Lord*, they are both of them put together in this Scripture: and it is a great comfort and advantage that they are so, that he who undertakes to save us, is no less than a Lord.

So much for that: And so of this whole Text; *For I am persuaded, that neither Death, nor Life, &c. shall be able to separate us, &c.*

F I N I S

7



An Alphabetical Table of the chief Matters contained in this Book.

A.

Affliction, *Comfort under it*, 13, 14, 269, 270, 274, 279, 283, 286, 378, 457, 488, 489, 506, 548, 563, 609. *Why God afflicts his people*, 267, 271, 279. *How to prepare for them*, 268. *None of Gods Children exempted; in what sense*, 268, 272, 579. *How to carry it under them*, 378, 570. *Reproof to such as grieve not under the Afflictions of others*, 377. *How Believers are conformable to Christ in them*, 486, 589. *Or partake with Christ in them. Why Believers sufferings are called Christs*, 269, 580. *Caution about them*, 270, 275. *Why said to be light*, 285. *Saints partake of one anothers Afflictions three wayes*, 580. *How overcome*, 613.

Adam; *Believers more happy by the Second, then they could have been by the First*, 187. *Difference between the two Adams*, 108. *Difference between the first and second Adam's sufferings*, 590.

Adoption, *What it is*, 234, 260, 395. *Why the Holy Ghost is called the Spirit of Adoption*, 234. *How the Spirit works in bringing the Soul into this state*, 235. *Upon what founded*, 236. *The immediate property and result of the Spirit of Adoption*, 237. *Trials of the Spirit of Adoption. See Trials. A two-fold witness of it*, 241. *Difference between temporal and spiritual Adoption*, 243.

Assurance, *Attainable in this life*, 227, 250, 400, 624. *Mediate assurance how let in*, 242. *Mediate proved*, 245. *Immediate, what?* 245. *Immediate trials of it*, 247. *No Assurance before Conversion*, 247. *The difference between immediate and mediate assurance*, 249. *Motives to get assurance*, 252.

Abba Father, *What it imports*.

Angels, *Good ones might be prejudicial to Christians three wayes, did not God prevent*, 627.

B.

Burial, *Of Saints should be decent*, 189, 625.

Body, *In what sense we are, and are not debtors to it*, 193. *Against pampering of it*, 193, 130. *Deeds of it, what?* 213.

Bondage, *Spirit of it, what?* 230. *How said, not to receive the Spirit of it again*, 230. *Reasons why God makes use of the Spirit of Bondage in order to Conversion*, 231. *Spirit of it, not in all alike*, 232. *Spirit of it, why more in some persons then others?* 232. *The lowest degree of the Spirit of Bondage, where God works savingly*, 232. *last line. Why the Children of God receive not the Spirit of it again*, 233. *Distinction between the spirit of Bondage and the spirit of Disertion*, 233. *Of Corruption, what?* 364.

Beings, *Distinguished*, 449.

Brethren, *Saints are Brethren; to whom?*

An Alphabetical Table.

whom? 490. Saints, in what respects Christs Brethren, 490.

C.

Condemnation, *Why true Believers are free from it*, 8, 11, 26, 547, 548. *Of sin, what?* 47.

Christ, *Why full of Grace*, 23. *Proved to be God*, 38, 549, 552. *His Manhood proved*, 40. *Only Saviour*, 45. *Why sent into the world?* 46. *Gods Attributes displayed in his Death*, 47. *Greatness of his Sufferings*, 494, 525. *The several periods of Christs Sufferings*, 527. *Died not (in a strict sense) for all*, 528, 551. *The latitude and restriction of his death*, 551. *His sitting at Gods right hand; what?* 553, 554. *The grounds of his Exaltation*, 553.

Conversion, *How the Holy Ghost works in Conversion*, 217. *Not in our power to work or hinder it*, 500.

Calling, *Two-fold*, 466. *Signs of effectual Calling*, 471.

Comfort, *Under poverty. See Poverty. Under distraction in Duty. See Duty. Under great Changes*, 376.

Creature, *How taken*, 364, 289. *What of them shall remain after the day of Judgment. See Judgment. The dumb Creatures expectation, how to be understood?* 290. *A double use of the Creatures*, 294. *A three-fold Word, by which its sanctified*, 303. *How sanctified by prayer*, 304. *Its Vanity. See Vanity. Should be mercifully dealt with*, 310. *Should be moderately used*, 212.

Children of God, *Described*, 454, 461. *Why pleasing to God*, 103. *Their conformity to Christ three-fold*, 481, 485. *In what sense none against them?* 515. *What their manifestation hereafter im-*

plies, 295. *How they ought to walk*, 259, 606. *See Walk. Why compared to sheep?* 606. *Over what Conquerors?* 611. *The weapons or means by which they conquer*, 613, 619. *More then Conquerors, in what sense?* 614. *The ground of their Conquest*, 617, 619.

Censure, *Caution against rash Censure*, 268.

Contentment. *See Patience. Motives to it*, 305.

Country, *Comfort, when remote from ones own Country*, 567.

Conviction, *To debauched persons*, 126. *Disobedience a Conviction of Enmity*, 89.

D.

Death, *Three-fold*, 21, 71, 205. *How far abolished*, 133. *Comfort against it*, 136, 189, 190, 397, 625. *Why all must die*, 130. *Sin a double cause of death*, 131.

Debts, *Several wayes contracted*, 194. *No debtors to the Flesh. See Body. See Sin. Why debtors to the Holy Ghost*, 198.

Duty, *Comfort under distraction in them*, 363, 555.

Day, *Of Judgment. See Judgment.*

Despair, *Concerning it*, 403.

Distress, *What it signifies*, 565.

Desertion, *Distinction between it and the spirit of Bondage*, 233.

Devils, *Why called Principalities and Powers*, 627. *Touching the Devils Injections*, 628.

Depth, *Several Depths*, 636.

E.

Evil, *Of sin. See Sin. Of Affliction. See Affliction. The evils the common Creatures are under for mans sin*, 378.

Excellency, *And dignity of true Christians*,

An Alphabetical Table.

Christians, 260, 381, 491, 548;
616. *Of Heaven*. See *Heaven*.
Of Grace, 331.

Election, Or *Gods fore-knowledge*
proved, 474. See *Predestination*.
It and Justification distinguished,
475. *Man as a laps'd Creature the*
Subject of Election, 476. *Is not of*
all, 506.

Enthusiasts, Reproved, 607.

F.

Flesh, *How taken*? 5, 57, 59, 92,
192. *What to walk after it*? 5.
What to mind the things of it?
60. *Why unregenerate men mind*
the things of it? 61. *To be in the*
Flesh, how taken? 91.

Fasting, *How far forth, and for what*
end required, 212.

Father, *Abba Father*, *what it im-*
ports? 239.

First-fruits, *How to be understood*,
380.

First-born, *Why Christ so called*?
492.

Famine, *Relief against the fear of it*,
568.

Free-will, *Confuted*, 88..

G.

Glory. See *Heaven*, *Why degrees of*
it, 12, 258. *Wherein it consists*,
280.

Grace, *Motives to grow*, 12, 258.
The same for substance in all Chri-
stians, 220. *How different in*
Christians, 220. *Why Saints de-*
sire to grow in it, 385. *Perseve-*
rance in it. See *Perseverance*.
Deceits respecting it, 121.

Gospel, *Its power*, 59. *Doctrine of*
threatnings, part of the *Gospel*
preaching, 207. *What to think of*
those without it, 101. *Motives to*
much reading and studying it,
608.

Groans, *Of the Creation, what*? 377.

Why the Children of God groan,
386. *The quality of a Saints groans*,
390. *What they import*, 433, 435.
Garments, *For a double use*, 568. *Com-*
fort under the want of them, 568.
Goodness, *Double in God*, 81.

H.

Hell, *Why its Punishments are eternal*,
206.

Hand, *Gods right hand*, *what it*
implies, 553.

Heirs, *How Christians come to be*
Heirs, 254, 263. *Of what Chri-*
stians are Heirs, 255. *How the*
Heirs of Glory should live, 259.

Heir of God, *what it imports*? 261.

Christ an Heir, *in what sense*? 262.

Heaven, *Its Excellencie*, 256. *Saints*
happiness there, 362. *Probably*
Saints shall have particular know-
ledge of one another there, 296.
How to prepare for it, 299.

Hope, *How taken in Scripture*, 399.
Signs of true Hope, 401. *Founda-*
tions of true Hope, 401. *How to*
keep it lively, 402. *What it is*, 404.
Difference between it and Faith,
405.

Hatred, *Of God, wherein it consists*,
81.

Height, *Several Heights*, 636.

I.

Imputation, *Of Christs active Righ-*
teousness to Believers, 51.

Justification, *Why it and sanctifica-*
tion go together, 55. *It and Elec-*
tion distinguished, 475. *How taken*,
504, 535. *Distinguished*, 535, 552.
In what sense justified persons pray
for it, 536. *Its several Periods*, 537.
Conditions in the person justified,
are not causes of it, 538. *The Na-*
ture or Properties of it, 538.

O

What

An Alphabetical Table.

What reſe-
ſence Chriſts } *Death* } have to
 } *Reſurreſtion* } our Ju-
 } *Ascenſion* } ſtification
 } *Interceſſion* } on, 549.

Judgment, *What the Creatures liberty at the day of Judgment imports?* 364. *The dumb Creatures ſhall not be annihilated, only altered at the day of Judgment,* 365. *What number of Creatures ſhall remain after the day of Judgment,* 368. *Day of it, why deſerred?* 502.

Impatience, *Several branches of it,* 409. *The evils of it,* 409.

Infirmities, *Concerning them, ſee* 412. *How the Spirit helps our Infirmities,* 419. *Comfort under them,* 555.

Interceſſion, *Two-fold,* 430. *Of Chriſt, wherein it conſiſts?* 556.

Infants, *What to judge of them dying in their Infancy,* 499.

K.

Killing, *Of the Creature ſhould be with tenderneſs,* 378. *Why wicked men kill the godly?* 572. *Why God ſuffers the godly to be killed?* 576. *How ſaid to be killed, when yet alive?* 576.

Knowledge, *How taken in Scripture?* 442. *Three-fold,* 455, 474.

L.

Law, *Why ſin ſo called?* 17. *How ſin became a Law?* 18. *Of the Spirit of life in Chriſt, what?* 22. *Moral, cannot juſtify a Sinner,* 29. 31. *Moral, its uſe,* 30. *Moral, how fulfilled in us?* 49, 51. *Moral, hath a double right,* 50. *Why the carnal mind rebels againſt Gods Law?* 84.

Life, *Arguments to a holy life,* 200, 201. *What to live after the fleſh?* See *Fleſh*. See *Mind*. *How the Children of God conſidered as Heirs ſhould live,* 259. See *Walk*. *A two-fold life,* 134.

Liberty, *Of Saints two-fold,* 362. *Of Saints at the Reſurreſtion,* 362.

Love, *Its Excellency,* 462. *Its Nature, or wherein it conſiſts,* 463. *Helps to it,* 463. *Of God diſtinguiſhed,* 94, 475. *Greatneſs of Gods Love in giving Chriſt,* 522. *Why Believers never ſeparated from the love of God,* 561. *In Chriſt diſtinguiſhed,* 121. *Greatneſs of Chriſts love diſplayed,* 618.

M.

Merit, *Conſuted,* 30, 203, 259, 286, 400, 471, 538, 550.

Mind, *What to mind a thing?* 60. *What to mind the things of the fleſh?* See *Fleſh*. *Why godly men mind the things of the Spirit?* 64. *Carnal, what?* 68. *Its Corruption,* 69. *Three ſorts are carnally minded,* 73. *Carnal-mindedneſs, its evil,* 74. *Spiritual-mindedneſs, called life in three reſpects,* 76.

Ministers, *Part of their work to preach threatnings,* 207. *Touching Miniſterial abſolution,* 540.

Mortification, *What it is,* 208. *A continual work,* 209. *Four Reaſons for Mortification,* 210. *Motives to it,* 211, 215. *Miſtaker about it,* 211, 214.

N.

Natural ſtate, *Its miſery,* 82, 99, 100, 124. *Motives to haſt out of it,* 83. See *its Miſery*. *Natures impotency,* 88, 121. *Natures ability and impotency,* 88. *State of Nature, what?* 93.

O.

Obedience, *What?* 86. *Impotency no excuſe for non-obedience,* 88. *Diſobedience a conviction of Enmity,* 89.

P.

An Alphabetical Table.

P.

Perfection, *None in this life*, 32.
 Poverty, *Comfort under it*, 223, 258, 261, 568. *How to carry it towards poor Saints*, 259.
 Prayer, *Its Nature and Essence*, 238, 433, 446. *Who pray best*, 238. *Maybe by a set form*, 239, 432. *Objection against forms of Prayer answered*, 239. *Children of God under a three-fold Impotency, or defect respecting it*, 415. *Whence impotency, and defects respecting it, springs*, 425. *How the Spirit helps us in it*, 430. *Mistakes about it*, 238. *Its prevalency*, 611.
 Persecution, *Whence it springs*, 266, 572, 582, 583, 601. *Terror to Persecutors*, 529, 270. *In a proper sense, what?* 567. *See Comfort under Affliction. Comfort under it*, 588, 609. *A double appointment to it*, 601.
 Patience, *Motives to it, under afflictions*, 267, 294, 410, 495. *What need we have of it*, 406. *Helps to it*, 410.
 Prosperity, *A Christians work in a prosperous Condition*, 267. *The danger of it*, 626.
 Predestination, *Proved*, 477. *See Election. Free*, 479.
 Perils, *How taken?* 568.
 Pope, *The insolency of his Title, (His Holiness)* 493. *Not infallible*, 102.
 Perseverance, *proved*, 112, 472, 507, 557, 639.
 Peace, *How taken?* 77.
 Pride, *The danger of spiritual pride*, 617.

Q.

Qualifications, *Of those that shall enjoy Heaven*, 363. *Qualifications are not causes*, 538.

R.

Regeneration, *Its necessity*, 62.
 Resurrection, *Of Christ proved*, 182. *Of Christ, why?* 182. *Of Christ, why ascribed to God the Father?* 182. *To what resembled*, 184. *Proved*, 184, 397. *Of Christ hath a three-fold influence respecting the Saints Resurrection*, 186. *Comfort from Christs Resurrection*, 186. *Distinguished*, 190. *Different to the godly and ungodly in three particulars*, 191. *Saints happiness then. See Heaven.*
 Religion, *A real thing*, 221, 467. *On what terms to take it up*, 608.
 Redemption, *Its different signification*, 396. *Touching universal Redemption*, 528, 551.
 Righteous, *How taken?* 273.

S.

Saint, *Doubly described*, 2. *Contrary to the ungodly in three particulars*, 58, 59. *Why he minds the things of the Spirit. See Mind*, 78, 565. *His Dignity. See Excellency*, 183. *Needs threatening Doctrines*, 207.
 Spirit, *What to walk after it?* 6. *Why Believers walk after it*, 6. *Motives to walk after it*, 15. *Of God, how it dwells in Believers*, 108, 183. *Of God, how taken*, 198. *Of Christ, how taken?* 116, 126. *How taken?* 133, 213, 225. *Its leading*, 216. *How it works in Conversion. See Conversion. The extent of its leadings*, 219. *As to times and persons*, 222. *Its leadings distinguished*, 224. *Its common Gifts*, 225. *Its common Works*, 225. *Of Bondage, what?* 230. *See Bondage. Why called the Spirit of Adoption? See Adoption. One Spirit, how taken in Scripture?* 242. *Why God gives his Spirit to*

An Alphabetical Table.

his people, 379. First-fruits of the Spirit, what it imports? 380. Objections against its Divinity answered, 433. Of discerning two-fold, 106, 438. For what purposes it dwells in us, 108, 118. Its procession from Christ proved, 117. What our having the Spirit implies, 118. A three-fold Spirit in men without Grace, 123. Of the World, what? 124.

Salvation, Sure to all Believers, 35, 39, 187, 254, 263, 402, 477, 489.

Sin, Motives to grieve for others sins, 378. Why called a Law? See Law. Why called the deeds of the Body? See Body. Why no debtors to it? 194. How to prevent it, 197. Why its punishments are everlasting? See Hell. Why it must be mortified? See Mortification. The evil of it, 82, 211, 132, 307, 375, 399. Motives to grieve for it, 376. Forgiveness of it, distinguished, 505.

Supererogation, Refuted, 203.

Sword, What it implies, 569, 571.

T.

Trials, Of our state, 63, 65, 114, 125, 211, 220, 228, 237, 379, 387, 394, 464, 482.

Thoughts, How far Satan may know them? 438. How to discern between a mans own thoughts and Satans infections; 629.

Tribulation, What the word signifies? 564.

V.

Union, With Christ, its similitude, 2. With Christ, its causes, bonds, or ligaments, 3. How improved for practice and comfort, 4. Among Saints, motives to it, 491, 221, 225.

Ungodly, Their misery, 19, 71, 99, 120, 196, 206, 293. Contrary to the godly in three particulars, 58, 59.

Understanding, Its Corruption, 69.

Vanity, What it implies? 302.

W.

Witness, A two-fold witness of Adoption. See Adoption. How our Spirit witnesseth our Adoption, 242. The immediate witness of the Spirit, what? 245. Why the Spirit is the witness of Adoption? 253. VValk. See Life, How the Children of God should walk? 259. How to walk as Christ did in the world? 127.

VVorld, The state of the dumb Creatures in it, at the day of Judgment. See Judgment. Arguments to take the heart from it, 305, 375, 385, 388.

VVaiting, What it implies? 393.

VVork, How all things work together for good? 452. Christs works distinguished, 482.

